

# THE FABLES OF ESOP, IN ENGLISH.

VVith al his life and fortune, how  
he was subtrill, wise, and borne in Greece, not far  
from Troy the great, in a Towne named *Amonia*.  
He was of all other men most deformed and euill shapen: for hee  
had a great Head, a large Visage, long lawes, sharpe Eyes, a short  
Necke, crook-Backed, great Belly, great Legges, large feete. And  
yet that which was worse, he was dumbe, and could not speake.  
But notwithstanding this, he had a singular wit, and was  
very ingenious and subtrill in cauillations, and pica-  
sant in words, after he came to  
his speech.

WHEREVNTO IS ADDED THE  
Fables of *Aelian*: and also the Fable of *Al, bonce*, with the  
Fables of *Poge* the Florentine, very pleasant  
to bee read.



LONDON,  
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heard this, he was much angry, and said: call to mee Esope, to whom he said, thou counterfeist churle, how is this hapned, that thou hast not been afraid to eate my figges: whereof Esope was afraide, and beheld them that had accused him. And the Lord commanded to take off his clothes and let him be beaten, but he kneeled downe at the Lords seate, and by signes (because he could not speake) prayed his Lord to giue him space to excuse him: his Lord granted it to him. And anon after, he tooke a vessel full of hot water, which was on the fire, and powred the same into a bason, and dranke thereof. And anon after he put his finger into his mouth, and cast vp all that was in his stomack, which was onely water, so that day he had tasted nothing but water: and he prayed that his accusers might sensibly drinke of the water as he had done. And so they did, and held their hand before their mouth because they would not vomit. But because the water was hot, and their stomackes resolued by the water, they vomited vp the water, and the figges together. And when the Lord saw it, he said to them, Why haue ye lied to me against this Esope which cannot speake? and then he commanded to speile them, and beate them openly, saying: Whosoever doth, or layeth wzong vpon other, shall be punished with the same paine that is due therefore. And these things seene & experimented, Esope returned againe to his labour. And as he laboured in the field, there came a priest named Isidis, which went toward the citie and had lost his way. And hee seeing Esope, prayed him that he would shew him the right way to the Citie. And Esope receiued him joyfully, and made him to sit downe vnder a figge tree, and

and set before him bread, hearbes, figges and Dates, and made signes to him to eate, and drew water of a pit, and gaue him to drinke. And when hee had well eaten, he tooke him by the hand, and set him in the right way for to goe to the Citie. After which things done, the Priest lift vp his hand to heauen, making his prayers to the gods for Esope, of whom he receiued so good refreshing.

How the Goddesse of Hospitalitie gaue speech of tongue to Esope, and how he was sold.

**T**hen Esope returned to his labour, and after when he had wel laboured, for to eschew the great heate of the Sun (after this viage) he went into the shadow for to rest and sleepe vnder a tree. And when the Goddesse of Hospitality appeared vnto him, and gaue him Sapience and Abilitie, also she gaue to him the gift of speech, for to speake diuers fables and inuentions, as to him which was right deuout to hospitalitie. And after when Esope was awaked, he began to say to himselfe, I haue not onely slept and sweetly rested, but also I haue had a faire dreame, & without any impeachment, I speake, and all that I see I call by their proper names: as an horse, an ore, a chariot, and to all other things, I can giue to euery one his name. For I haue receiued suddenly the grace of this knowledge, for the great pitie that I haue had on them which lacked hospitalitie; for he that doth well, ought to haue good hope in God, that he shall haue good reward therefore, and therefore I shall not labour lesse then I did before. And thus whē Esope began to labour, there came he that had the charge of the feld, and the ouer-sight, & anon he be-

gan to beat one of the labourers grienously, wherewith Esope was greatly displeased, & said to him in this manner: Why beatest thou him for nought? and every houre thou comest & beatest vs without any cause, thou killest vs and dost nought thy selfe. But I shall tell to my Lord all this matter like as thou shalt well know of it. And when the Procurator heard him called by his owne name Zenas, he marvelled that Esope spake, and thought in himselfe, I shall go before my Lord, to the end that this foule villaine complaine not of me, and that my Lord put not me from my place. And he took his mule and rode vnto the city, & came to his Lord, and said, My Lord, I humbly salute you. And the Lord looked on him and said, why comest thou so afraid and troubled? And Zenas sayde vnto him, that now in the field is hapned a thing monstrous. What is that, said the Lord? haue the trees brought forth their fruite before the time, or haue the beasts brought forth their fruite against nature? And Zenas answered him: nay my Lord, but the crooked churle, the counterfeited Esope, beginneth to speake clearely. Truly said his Lord, this indeede is a thing that to me seemeth monstrous: yea soothly said Zenas. When said the Lord, we see daily many men when they bee angry cannot speake, but when they bee in peace, can well speake, and proffer things. And then Zenas said, my Lord, hee can speake aboue all other, & hath said to mee things confumelious, blasphemous, and villainous, of thee and all thy goods. Whereat his Lord was very angry, and said, Go thou to the field, and what thou wilt doe with him, doe it, sell him, or giue him, or loose him, for I giue him to thee. And then

Zenas

Zenas took his gift by writing, and came againe into the field, and said to Esope, now thou art mine, and in my power, for my Lord hath giuen thee to mee, and because thou art a villaine and an euill churle, I shall sell thee vnto the city. And then it fortuned that a Merchant that had bought seruants, came into the field to buy beasts, for to beare ouer his merchandize to Ephesus, the which met with Zenas, and he saluted him, and demanded of him if he had any beasts to sell. And Zenas answered, that for nothing he should find no beasts to sell, but I haue a seruant which is not faire, and he is of a good age, which if thou wilt thou shalt buy. And the Merchant said, hee would first see him. And then Zenas called Esope and shewed him to the Merchant. And when the Merchant saw him so foule and deformed, he said in this manner: From whence is this villaine come, and this trumpet of Tragetentus? this is a faire merchandize, for if he had not a voyce, I should take him for a bottle full of wind: yee bee well occupied to bring me hither to shew me this faire personage, I supposed thou wouldest haue sold to mee a comely seruant, honest and pleasant. And then the Merchant returned on his way, & Esope followed him, saying in this manner, Abide a little here, and the merchant said, hinder me not villaine, for thou maiest haue no profit of me: for if I bought thee, I should be called the Merchant of fooles, and of vaine things. And then Esope said vnto him, Wherefore art thou then come hither? and the Merchant answered him, to buy something that is faire and comely, but thou art foule, deformed, lothsome, and counterfeited: Wherefore I meane to haue no whit at all to doe

A 4

with

with such merchandize. And then Elope said, if thou wilt buy me, thou shalt lose nothing. And the Merchant demanded wherein maist thou doe me any profit? Then Elope said: Was there not in thy house little children, one in the towne, that cry and runne: buy mee and thou shalt doe wisely, and shalt be their Father, for they shall bread & feare me like a false visage. And then the Merchant smiled at the words of Elope, and returned back to Zenas, asking him how he would sell that faire merchandize. Zenas said vnto him, giue me thirty pound or three halfe pence for him: for I wot well that no man will buy him: and then the Merchant payd for him as much as he was well content with, and Elope went with his Father into his country. And as he entred into the house he saw two children lying in the lap of their mother: then said Elope to the Merchant, How shalt thou haue experience of that I haue promised, for since these two little children haue seene me, they haue been still and askead. And then the Merchant laughing, bad him to enter, and he seeing his fellows faire and pleasant, saluted them saying: I salute you my faire fellows. Now when they sawe Elope they saide all, wee shall haue anon a faire personage, what will our Father doe to buy such a man, so soule & so deformed? And their Lord answered, because that I haue found no beasts to helpe you, therefore I haue bought this gallant, to helpe you to beare your carriage, wherfore depart among you the sables for to beare. And Elope said to them, O my good fellows, ye see well that I am the least and feeblest, I pray you therefore to giue me the lightest burthen: and his fellows said to him, because thou maist beare nothing:

So

To whom Elope said, because ye doe all the labour, it is not meete that I onely should be idle, and vnprofitable to my Lord.

How Elope demanded the lighter burthen, but to the seeming he tooke the heauiest, which was at last the lightest, and so he beguiled his fellowes.

**T**hen his fellowes said to him thus, which wilt thou beare? And Elope beholding al the burthens, sables, packs, and paniers, tooke a panier full of bread, which two of the beaters were ready to haue borne. and said: let me haue this panier to beare. When they said he was the most foole of the, because he might haue chosen the lightest, and took the heauiest. But he tooke the panier of bread, and went forth befoze al his fellowes: which when his fellowes beheld and saw, they all said that their master had not lost his money, for he was strong, and might beare yet a heauier burthen: & thus they mocked him, but alwaies Elope was at his lodging befoze his fellowes. And when they were arrived at their lodging, their master made them to rest, & commanded Elope to bring forth bread to eate, and so he tooke bread out of his panier that his panier was halfe empty. And when they had well eaten, each of them tooke his burthen, and Elope bore lesse then he did, and came to his lodging befoze his fellowes, and at supper he gaue so much bread, that his panier was all empty. And on the next day he tooke his panier, and went so fast befoze his fellowes that they knew him not, so that one demanded, Who is he that goeth so farre befoze vs? and another said, it



it is the croke-backed and counterfained Churle, which by his subtilty hath deceined vs that beare the burthens not consumed by the way, but he hath anoi- ded his burthen, & is moze wily then we be. And when they came to Ephesus, the Merchant led his merchan- dize to the market, and also his thye seruants to sell, which were named Garmaticus, Saltis, and Esope: & a merchant said to him, if thou wilt sel thy seruants at a reasonable pyce, there is a Philosopher named Exan- tus, to whom much people goo to learne at a place cal- led Somnon, leade thy seruants thither, and the philo- sopher will buy them: and the merchant did well aray Garmaticus & Saltis with new robes, and led them thi- ther soz to sell: but because Esope was so foule & loth- some, he was clad in cannas, and was set betwene the other two which were faire, pleasant, and well fanou- red men: but all they that beheld Esope, were abashed because of his defoymity, saying: From whence com- meth this fellow? And because they so wondered at him, he looked all ouerthwartly on them boldly.

Of the second sale of Esope.

**A**nd when the market day came, Exantus the Phi- losopher departed out of his house, and went to and fro throughtout the market, and he saw these two yongmen, and Esope standing betweene them, whereat he marueld greatly soz what cause the mer- chant had so sozted them, and approaching to one of them, he said in this manner, Of what country art thou: and he answered, I am of Cappadocce. And Ex- antus demaunded of him, saying: what canst thou doe? And hee answered, I can doe all things that thou wilt: which answere when Esope heard, hee laughed,

laughed, shewing his great teeth: and all the schollers that were there with Exantus beholding Esope so soze laughing, and shewing his great teeth, they thought they saw a monster and not a man, and said to their fellows, this great whozson hath very big teeth. And some asked what they had seene, and they said, that he soze laughed, and shewed them his teeth, and some said hee laughed not, but that hee was a cold on his teeth: and one of them demanded wherefoze he laugh- ed, calling him gentle gallant: and he said, what hast thou to doe therewith knaue? goe thy way: and that scholler departed all ashamed, following his Master. And then Exantus demaunded the pyce of Saltis: & the Merchant said that he should pay soz him a thousand pence: and Exantus esteeming the pyce ouer deare, re- turned to the other fellow, and said to him, Of whence art thou? and he said, of Lido: and Exantus asked of him: what canst thou doe? and he said, I can do all that thou weneest: and when Esope heard these words, hee laughed moze then he did before. And when the schollers saw him laugh againe, they said: this fellow laugheth at all things. When Exantus demaunded the pyce of Garmaticus, and the Merchant said thye M. crownes, which Exantus thought too deare, & went his way. When the schollers said to their Master, These seruants please thee not. yes said Exantus: they please me well, but it is ordained in our City, that no ser- uant should be bought at so high a pyce, vpon a great paine. And one of the schollers said: seeing they that be faire cannot be bought, buy him that is foule and defoymed, truely he shall doe thee some seruice, and the pyce that he shall be sold soz, wee our selues will pay.

And

And Exantus said to them, If I should buy this vile laine that is so foule and vncleane, my wife would not be well pleased, for she is so curious, that she may not suffer her selfe to be serued of such a counterfeited servant. And then the schollers said, Master thou doost many things, with which thy wife shall not gaine say noz meddle. Then Exantus said to them, Let vs then demand of him what he can doe, lest for default of asking we should lose our money. When Exantus turned him to Esope and said, God saue thee yong man: and Esope said to him in this manner, I pray thee grieue me not. Then Exantus said to Esope, I salute you. So do I thee said Esope. Well, leaue these mocks said Exantus, and answer me that I shall demand: and hee asked, what art thou? and Esope answered, I am of flesh and bone. Then Exantus said, I demand not that, but where wast thou bozne: and Esope answered, In the wombe of my mother: and Exantus said, yet I aske not that of thee, but I aske of thee in what place thou wert bozne: and Esope said, my Mother neuer told noz assured mee, whether shee was deliuered of mee in the chamber or in the hall. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me what thou canst doe? Esope said nothing. Exantus saide: What canst thou doe nothing? Esope said, no. Wherefore, said Exantus? Because said Esope, my fellowes say they can doe all things, and then will they leaue nothing for me to doe. Then the schollers were much abashed, and had great maruell at him, saying: This scollard answereth by diuine wisdom, for there is none to be found that can do all things, and therefore he laughed. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell mee if thou wilt that

that I shall buy thee: and Esope said, What is in thee, no man shall constrain thee thereto: neuerthelesse, if thou wilt buy me, open thy purse, and tell the money, and make the bargaine. Then the Schollers sware by all the gods, this fellow exceedeth our Master. Then Exantus said to him in this manner, If I buy thee, wilt thou not runne away? When Esope answered, If thou thinke that I will runne away, I counsel thee not to buy me. Surely, said Exantus, thou saiest well, but thou art very lothsome and deformed. To whom Esope said, Men ought not onely to behold the face of a man, but rather to regard the courage. Then Exantus demanded of the merchant, what shall I pay for this Esope? And the merchant said to him, thou art a foolish merchant, to leaue these faire and goodly servants, and to take him that can doe nothing, take one of these two, and let this Ass goe: and Exantus said, I require thee to tell me what I shall pay. When the merchant said threescore pence. Then the Schollers told out the money to the merchant, and thus by this bargaine, Esope became servant vnto Exantus. And when the banquers receiued the money for the sale of Esope, they demanded curiously who were the buyer and seller. When Exantus and the merchant compounded and accorded betweene them, that hee had not bin sold for so much money. But Esope said to the Banquers, this is he that hath bought mee, and this is he that hath sold mee, which thing they will deny, wherefore I affirme and say, that I am free. Then the Banquers laughed at this cauillation, and went and receiued the price of Exantus, for as much as he had bought Esope.

How

How Exantus brought Esope home  
to his wife.

**T**hen when every man was departed, Esope followed Exantus home to his house, and when he came before his house, he said to Esope, abide here a while before the gate, untill I goe in for to praise thee to my Lady and Mistresse my wife. Well sir, said Esope: and then Exantus entred into his house, and said to his wife, Dame yet shall no more have cause to be at debate with me, for ye have desired me long for to get you a faire servant, wherefore now I have bought one that is so wise, and so pleasant, that thou neuer sawest one better. And when two of the Ladies servants heard him say so, weening that it had bin truth, they began to strive together, & the one began to say to the other, My Lord hath bought for me a faire husband: and the other said: This night have I dreamed that I was married: and thus his servants talked. But his wife said, my Lord, where is the faire fellow that yee praise so much? I pray you let me see him: and Exantus said, he is before the Gate. And his wife said, I pray you bring him in: and as the two yong women had debate for him, one of them thought in her selfe, I shall see him first, and if I may, hee shall be my Husband, and so she issued out of the house, and said: where is this faire yong man that I desire to see: and Esope said to her, what demandest thou? I am hee. And when she saw Esope, shee was abashed, and said unto him, Art thou the faire Peacocke? where is thy tayle? And Esope said to her againe, If thou

haue

haue néede of a taile, thou shalt not saile of one. And then as he would haue gone in, the servant said unto him, come not here; for all that shall see thee will runne away. And after she went in, and told her fellow what he was: and when she came out, and saw him so deformed, she said, beware thou knaue that thou touch me not: and when Esope entred into the house, anon he was presented to the Lady: and when the Lady saw him, anon she turned to Exantus and said: in stead of a servant thou hast bought a Monster, throw him out: and Exantus said to her, My wife, thou oughtest to be glad and ioyful, because I haue brought to thee so faire and so good a servant: and she said to Exantus, How wot I well that thou lovest me not, for thou desirest to haue another wife, and because thou durst not tell it mee, thou hast bought mee this foule great knaue, to the intent that I goe from thee: I will no longer abide, for thou knowest wel that I may not suffer him, and therefore deliuer me my dowrie, and I shall go my way. And the Exantus said to Esope, when we were on the way thou spakest largely, & now thou saiest nothing: and Esope said to him, because thy wife is so malicious, put her in prison. Exantus said, Hold thy peace, else shalt thou be beaten, seest thou not that I loue her more then my selfe? then said Esope, I pray thee that thou loue her well: and shee said, wherefore not? Then Esope smote his foote on the pavement, and cryed out with a loude voyce, saying: Marke, this Philosopher Exantus is overcome of a woman: and then Esope turned him to his Lady, and said to her: O adame, I pray you take not my wordes at the worst. Thou wouldest haue a servant that were yong, well

well so;med, well arrayed, strong and rich, to serue thee at thy dinner and beare thee to thy bed, that can rubbe and claw thy feete, and not such a foule man and so deformed a seruant as I am: for if thou hadst such a one, thou wouldest set nought by thy husband, & therefore Erupus the Philosopher had his mouth of God, which neuer lyed. Hee said that there were many perils and torments on the Sea, and other great rivers, and also pouerty is a hard thing, & difficult to be borne: and also there be many other great dangers, and troubles infinite: but there is no worse danger nor peril then a false woman. And therefore Madame, I pray you that you take no more a faire seruant nor pleasant to serue thee, lest thereby thou dishonor thy Lord and husband. The she said to Esope, auoide hence thou villaine, which art not onely deformed of thy body, but also of thy words: but I shall go my way. When said Exantus to Esope, Thou seest how thou hast angered my Wife, see thou please her; and Esope said; it is no small thing to please the ire of a woman, but a great thing. Exantus sayd to Esope, speake no more, for I haue bought thee to make peace, and not to make debate and strife.

How Exantus brought Esope into a garden.

**E**Xantus bad Esope take a pannier, and follow him into the Garden. And Exantus said to the Gardiner, Give vs of thy hearbes: and the gardiner cut off the hearbs in diuers places, and deliuered them to Esope, and he tooke them, and Exantus payed for them: and when he was departing, the gardiner saide to him, Master, I pray thee that thou wilt aske mee a question: Well, said Exantus, aske what thou wilt: and the Gardiner demanded of him, say-

ing:

ing; Master, what is the cause that the hearbs that be not labored, grow faster and sooner, than they that be curiously laboured? This question answered Exantus, that they came by some prouidence by which the things were brought forth. When Esope heard this answer, he began to laugh. And Exantus said to him; Thou villaine, laughest thou mee to scorne? and Esope said. I mocke thee not, but him that hath learned thee thy Philosophy, what solution hast thou made? What is that that cometh of Diuine Prouidence? A childe of the kitchen will make as good an answer. Exantus then said to Esope, make thou then a better solution. Esope sayd vnto him, If thou command me, I shall gladly. Exantus sayd vnto him; It appertaineth not to him that iudgeth things of difficulty, to iudge rude things and rusticall, but I haue a seruant here which shall informe and giue the solution of thy question, if thou wilt request him. And the gardner replied. Can this villaine palliard that is so greatly deformed, answer to this question? When the Gardner said to Esope, hast thou knowledge of such things? And Esope said; Yea truely, more then all the men in the world. For thou requirest wherefore the hearbs that bee not laboured, grow sooner than they that be sowne and laboured? Esope replied, Take heed to my answer: for as a woman that hath bin a widow, and hath had children by her first husband that is dead, and after was married to another man, which hath had children of another wife before: and vnto the children of her first husband, she is a mother, & to the other children, she is but a step-mother. Thus there is a difference betweene her owne children, and that

other womans. For her children she hath nourished peaceably, and the other children in anger & wrath. In this manner it is of the earth; for she is mother of the hearbs that grow without labour, and is but step-mother to the hearbes that doe grow by labour and force. Said the Gardiner then, thou hast eate mee of much study; therefore I pray thee take of the herbs that be in my garden at all times, and when you list.

How Esope did beare the Present.

**O**n a time, when the schollers had been in the auditooy with Exantus, one of the schollers dyell precious meats for the supper of Exantus and other: and when they were at supper, Exantus tooke of the best meats, and put them in a platter, and sayd to Esope, Go beare this to her that loues me best. And Esope thought in himselfe; Now is it time to auenge me best on my Mistris. And when he came home into the Hall, he said vnto his Mistris: Madame, beware that ye eate not of his meate. And his Lady sayd, I wot well alwayes that thou art a great foole. Esope said to her, Exantus hath not commanded me to giue it to thee, but to her that loneth him best.

Then Esope presented the platter to a litle hound, which was alwayes in the house, saying to her: My Lord hath sent to thee this precious meate. When the wife of Exantus went into her chamber, and began to weepe. And Esope returned to Exantus, and hee asked him, how his loue fared: he said, Right well; and all the meate that I haue set before her, she hath eaten it. And Exantus sayd, what said she: and hee said, My Lord, she sayth nothing, but she desireth to see thee. When they had well eaten and drunke, one asked

asked when mostall men shall haue most to doe? Esope said that shall be at the day of iudgement. The schollers hearing this, said: this villaine is full of answers, and nothing said, Why goeth the sheepe to his death following his master, and saying nothing, and when the swine is brought to be slaine, he doth both cry and pray? And Esope answered and said: because it is accustomed to milke and sheare sheepe, and he weeneth that he shall bee soothwith either milked or shorne, and therefore feareth not at all: But because the swine is not accustomed to be milked or shorne, but to be letten blood and to lose his life, therefore he dreads when he is taken. And all the schollers said it is troth: As this man is wise, and hath said well. Then each man arose and went his way.

And when Exantus was returned home to his house, he entred into his chamber, and found his wife soze weeping, and hee said vnto her: my sweet loue, how is it with you? and kissed her, and shee turned her backe to him, and said, let me alone, I haue not to doe with thee, I will goe from thee for thou lonest better thy hound then me, to whom thou hast sent thy precious meate. And because he knew nothing thereof, he demanded, what meate hath Esope brought to thee: And shee said, none at all. Exantus said, I am not drunke, I sent to thee by Esope a platter full of precious meate, and shee said: not to me, but to thy hound. When he called Esope and demanded of him to whom hast thou giuen the meate I delivered to thee: and he said, to her that loneth thee best, like as thou commandest me. And Exantus said to his wife, vnderstandest thou not what he saith? I vnderstand him

him well, said she, but he gaue to mee nothing, but gaue it to thy hound. When Exantus turned to Esope and said to him: thou great villaine, to whom hast thou bozned the meate I deliuered to thee? Esope answered, to her that loueth thee best. And Exantus demanded who was she? And Esope called the little hound, and said: this is she, for the lone of thy wife is right nought, for if she be a little angry, incontinent she repproueth thee, & speaketh violently to thee that lonest her, and will say, I will goe from thee and leaue thy house: & if this hound go from thee, call her againe and she cometh anon, making thee cheere, and therefore thou oughtest to say, to thy wife, and not to her that loueth thee best. When Exantus said to his wife, thou seest this fellow is a railer and an inuenter of words and therefore haue patience, for I shall finde cause to auenge thee, and beate him. And she said, do what thou wilt, for I shall neuer haue moze to doe with him, and after that thy hound, for I go my way: and without saying farewell, she went home to her friends. And Exantus was angry & sorrowfull for her departing: and Esope said to him, Now seest thou well that thy wife that is gone loneth thee not, but this little hound abideth by thee. Exantus all heauy for his wiues departing, prayed her to returne, but it auayled not: for the moze a woman is prayed, the moze is she obstinate, and will do the contrary.

How Esope made his Lady to come home againe.

**A**nd because Exantus was angry for the departing of his wife, Esope said to him, Master, be not

not angry, for without praying I shall make her returne, and come againe vnbidden. So that they shal be moze louely, meeke, and obedient to your commandments, then euer she was before. And then Esope went to the market, and bought capons and many other pulles, and as hee bare them passing by the house where his mistresse was, it happened that one of the seruants of the house came out. And Esope demanded of him, Haue ye sent nothing to the wedding of my Lord? To what wedding said the seruante? Unto the wedding of Exantus said Esope, for to morrow he shall wed a wife. And anon the seruante went into the house & said to Exantus wife: Whatam there be new tidings. What be they said she? Exantus shall haue a wife and be married, & forthwith incontinent she departed and came home to the house of Exantus crying: Now know I well the troth, & wherefore thou madest this great villaine to anger me, because thou wouldest take another wife, but I shall keepe thee well therefore, for as long as I liue shall neuer woman come here: Exantus be thou sure. When was Exantus ioyfull for to haue againe his wife, and gaue Esope great thanks.

How Exantus sent Esope to the market, to buy the best meate he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues.

**A**nd a little while after, Exantus had his scholars to dinner with him, and saide vnto Esope goe anon to the market, and buy vs of the best meat thou canst finde. And Esope went to the market and thought in himselfe, now shall I shew that I am no foole, but wise. And when Esope came to the market,



that was not curious nor cared for nothing: he went abroad and espyed a great villaine sitting on a blocke wagging his legs and whistling with his mouth, to whom Esope said, My Lord desireth thee to come and dine with him; which anon rose, without saying any word, and entred into the house with Esope, and not saying God speed you, sat downe at the table. And Exantus said to Esope, what man is this? Esope said, a man that careth for nothing. The Exantus said vnto his wife secretly, to the intent that we may anenge vs on Esope and beate him well, faire lone do that I bid you. When he said aloud, dame put water in a bason and washt his pilgrimes feet, for hee thought the villaine would not haue suffered it, but to haue refused it for shame and then should he haue had cause to haue beaten Esope. When the Lady tooke water & put it in a bason, and began to wash the villaines feet. And howbeit that shee was his Lady: yet this villaine thought, this Lord will doe mee some worship, and suffered her to wash his feet, without saying any word. And Exantus said to his wife, dame giue him drinke. And the villaine said to himselfe, it is well worthy that I drinke first, and he tooke the piece and dranke as much as he might. And Exantus tooke the Platter with the Fish, and set before him. And the villaine strained no cortesse, but ate it every morsell. And Exantus saide to the Cooke, this fish is not well drest. When Exantus commanded the Cooke to bee beaten. And the Villaine saide to himselfe, this fish is well dight, and the Cooke is beaten without cause, but I care not, so that I may fill my belly, and I shall alway eate and say nothing.

nothing. Exantus said vnto the Cook, bring in a Tart, and incontinent as a Tart was brought, the villaine brake it in pieces, & without any words he began to eate therof. And Exantus beholding him how he ate, called the Cooke and said, this tart is euill baked and hath no saueur. And the Cooke said, if I made it, it is well drest, and if it be none of mine, the blame is not in me but in thy wife. Exantus said: When and if my wife hath made it, I shall burne her aliuie, and bad his wife she should not answer, because he would finde cause to beat Esope: and then said Exantus to one of his seruants, Goe fetch some wood & bushes to burne my wife: and this said he to see if the villaine would arise and saue her from burning; and the villaine said to himselfe, this man will burne his wife without cause. When said he vnto Exantus; Sir, if thou wilt burne thy wife, abide a little while, and I shall goe fetch my wife in the field, and burne them both together. Exantus hauing heard these words he marvelled much, and said: Merily this man careth for nothing. And then he said to Esope, thou hast banquished me. But now let it suffice thee from henceforth, if thou wilt serue me truly, thou shalt sooner returne into thy liberty. When Esope said vnto him, I shall serue thee so now as thou wert neuer better serued. Now three dayes after Exantus sayd to Esope, Goe and see if there be much people in the Bath, for if there be none, I will goe there and bathe mee: and as Esope went by the way, hee met with the Iudge of the Citty; and because he knew him, he saide to Esope, whither goest thou great head? Esope sayd vnto him, I wot not: because he waned he mocked him, the



it not what wilt thou lose? And Exantus said: My house. I am content said the scholler, and against thee I will lay an hundred crownes on the bargain; and this done, each of them gaue their pledges, their signet of gold, & then went home. And on the morrow Exantus rose out of his bed, and saw that he had lost his ring off his finger, he said to Esope: knowest thou not where my ring is? I know not said Esope, but well I know so certaine, that this day we shal be put out of our house. And why said Exantus? Esope said to him remembrest thou not the bargain that thou madest yesterday at euen: what bargain, said Exantus? Esope said, that thou art bound to drinke all the sea, and so gage hast left thy ring of gold: and when Exantus heard these words, he was soze abashed, and said: in what manner shall I drinke all the sea: this may not be, so; it is impossible: wherefore Esope I pray thee tel me, if it please thee, how I may vanquish or breake this bargain. And Esope said thou shalt lose, but perhappes I shall make that thou shalt well breake the bargain. And the manner of it (said Esope) is this, that when thine aduersary shall require thee to fulfill thy promise, thou shalt command seruants that they bring a table, and all such other things as is necessary to be vpon the riuage of the sea, and make the butlers and seruants to abide there with thee, and before all the company thou shalt make a pce to be washed and filled full of the water of the sea, and shalt take it in thy hand, and pray that the Bargaine may be declared before all the fellowship, and say thou wilt assure the promise as well before drinke as after; and thus shalt thou say to all the fellowship.

ship, My Lords of Samie, ye know how yesterday at euen, I made promise to drinke by all the water in the sea. But all ye wot well how many great floods and riuers come and fall into the Sea. Wherefore I demand (and as reason is) that mine aduersary keepe and hold the riuers that they enter not into the sea, and then shall I drinke all the waters in the sea, and so the bargain shall be broken and vndone.

How Exantus excused him from his promise by the counsell of Esope.

Exantus then knowing that the counsell of Esope was good, he was full glad. His aduersary then came before Zenas, one of the city, to tell & shew the bargain, & prayed the iudge that Exantus should doe that which he had promised to doe. And Exantus commanded all his seruants that they should beare his bed, and his table, and all other things that were necessary to him vpon the riuage of the sea. And then before all the company he made a pce to be washed, & filled it full of the water of the sea, which he tooke in his hand and said to his aduersary, declare we now our bargain: and Exantus then turned him toward the fellowship & said, my Lords of Samy, ye wot well how many floods & riuers enter into the sea, & if my aduersary will hold the still, so that they enter no more into the sea, then will I drinke all the water that is in the sea. And all they that were there began to say, Exantus saith wel. And the aduersary said to Exantus, my master, thou hast vanquished mee, wherefore I pray thee, that our bargain may be broken. And Exantus said I am content: and when Exantus was turned home into his house, Esope did pray to him saying

saying thus: My master, because, I haue holpen thee at thy need, let me now goe at my liberty.

How Exantus found cause to  
beate Esope.

**E**Xantus then caried him, saying: great head, yet shalt thou not escape from me: go thou, see and behold before the gate if thou canst espy two crows together, & then come againe and tell me, for the sight of two crows one nigh the other is good fortune, but the sight of one alone is evil fortune. And as Esope went out of the house, he saw two crows by on a tree, wherefore he soon returned againe and told his Master. But as Exantus went out of the house, the one of them flew away, then said he, ah great head where be the two crows that thou sawest? And Esope said, as I went to call thee, the one flew away. And Exantus said, ah thou crook-backed knave, it is ever thus thy manner to mock me: but thou shalt not thus scape scotfree, wherefore he commanded him to vndoe his clothes, that he might be beaten, and as the men were beating him, Exantus was called to dinner, and then Esope said, alas, how much miserable am I, for I haue seene two crows and yet am I beaten, and Exantus which saw but one, is called to dainty fare: surely there is none to whom the birds bee so contrary as to me. And when Exantus heard him, he much marvelled at the subtilty of his wit, and commanded to leaue beating him. And within a while after, Exantus said to Esope, Goe thou and dresse vs some meate to our dinner, for all these Lords shall dine with mee, and Esope went to the market and bought

bought all that he could buy, and when it was ready, he brought it into the Hall, where he found his Mistresse lying on the bed sleeping: wherefore he awaked her and sayd: Madam, please it you, to take heede of this meate, that the dogs and cats eate it not, for I must go into the kitchen againe: and she said to him; Goe thou where thou wilt, for my buttockes haue eyes. And when Esope had made ready all the other meates, he brought them into the Hall, and found his mistresse fast asleep with her buttocks towards the table, and because she said, that her buttocks had eyes, Esope tooke vp her clothes, so as euery man might see her taile, and thus he left her sleeping.

How Exantus found his wife  
all discovered.

**A**ND when Exantus and his Schollers came to dinner, they perceiued his wife as shee was sleeping, her buttocks all bare and naked. With great shame Exantus turned his face toward Esope, saying knave, what is this? And Esope sayd: My Lord, as I did put the meate vpon the Table, I prayed my Lady that she would keepe it from the dogges, and she answered, that her buttocks had eyes: and because I found her sleeping, I discovered her buttocks, to the intent that her buttocks might the better see and look about. When Exantus replied vnto him, ah thou thyrd and crooke-backed villaine, oft hast thou serued mee such knauish trickes: What worse thing canst thou doe to me, than to mocke both mee and my wife also? but the time will come that I shall make thee die an euill death. And within a while after,

Exantus

Exantus said to Esope: Look well that no fooles enter into my house, but onely the Orators and Philosophers. Esope set himselfe beside the Gate, and as one of the Philosophers should haue entred, Esope began to grin and sayd, Come in thou dogge, and the Philosopher thinking he had derided him, al wroth went his way: and thus did many other. But at the last, came there one that was very subtil, to whom Esope did as he had done to the other: & he that was wise, answered him sweetly, and then Esope did let him enter into the house, and anon he went againe to his Lord and said, No Philosopher is come to the gate, but this one: wherefore Exantus thought al the other had mockt him, and was very angry. On the morrow as they met with Exantus, they said to him thus, Exantus, thou mockedst vs wel yester day; for he that kept the gate, cast on vs a shrewd loke, and called vs Dogs: for which cause Exantus was more troubled than he was before. And anon he called Esope, and sayd to him; So thou crooke-backed counterfeited, and false churle, they whom thou shouldst haue received with worship and great honour, those thou hast vitupered and mocked. Esope sayd vnto him, Thou chargedst and commandedst me, that I should let none enter into thy house, but wise Philosophers. And Exantus sayd; Ah false face, and crooke-backed knave, be not these wise Philosophers? No certainly, replied Esope; for when I bade them enter into thy house, they entred not, and like soles went their wayes againe, without saying any word: but this one answered wisely; and therefore I repute and allow him a sage and wise Philosopher; and the other  
as

as fooles, for a foole is he that taketh any light thing in anger. And then all the Samiens and Philosophers that were there, approued the answer of Esope, and they maruelled much at his wisdom.

How Esope found a treasure, and how Exantus made him to be put in prison.

And within a while after, as Exantus & Esope were together beholding the great sepulchers or tombs and the Epitaphs of ancient folke, Esope perceiued an arch that was high of a colunne, vnto the which men went vnto by foure steps, thither he went, and without any consonants he saw letters written, after the manner following A B E O C T H C H. When Esope called his master and said vnto him: My Lord, what betokeneth these Letters: Exantus looked and beheld them well, and knew not what they should signifie: wherefore he said to Esope, tell me what these letters signifie, and Esope said my Lord if I shew thee a faire treasure, what reward shall I haue of thee? Exantus said: haue thou a good courage, for I shall giue thee freedom and libertie and halfe of the treasure: and anon Esope went downe the foure steps, and so deepe he delued at the foote of the colunne, that he found the hidden treasure: which anon he brought vp to his Lord and said: My Lord, I pray thee that thou wilt do vnto me as thou hast promised: and Exantus said to him, or euer thou hast liberty and freedom, thou must learne me how thou knowest this Science; for the vnderstanding thereof, shall be more precious vnto me then to haue all the treasure: & Esope said, he that had this treasure, had specified it by the letters  
which

which is here written in Latine, *Ascende gradus istos quatuor, fodias & inuenies Thesaurum auri.*

Then Exantus told him: Sith thou art so subtil thou shalt not yet haue libertie: and Esope said vnto him, Looké well what thou doest, for this treasure appertaineth to the king Dionysius. And Exantus asked of him how he knew that? and Esope said, by the letters, which signifie vnto vs: that thou giue vnto Dionysius the treasure which thou hast found. And when Exantus heard him say that the treasure which the found was as pertaining to the king Dionysius, he said thus: Esope, take thou the one halfe of this treasure, and let no man know of it. Esope then said vnto him, thou giuest it me not, but he that hid it here giueth it vnto me. And Exantus said, How knowest thou that? Esope answered, by the letters following, which signifie the same, to wit, *EDQ-IT A.* The which letters signifie in Latine, *Euntes dimitte quem inuenistis Thesaurum auri.* And then Exantus said: goe we home, and there we shall part it.

How Exantus deliuered Esope out of prison, and how Exantus promised him freedom and libertie.

**A**fter that Exantus was returned home againe, he maruailed greatly at the wisdom of Esope. But for the libertie and freedom which hee demanded, he was angry, and dreading the tongue of Esope made him to bee put in prison. Then said Esope, this is a faire promise of a Philosopher. Thou wottest well how thou promisedst vnto me freedom and liberty,

liberty, but in stead thereof I am put into prison. When as Exantus heard him say so, he reuoked and changed his sentence, and made him to be deliuered, and after said vnto him, If thou wilt be put to thy liberty, hold thy tongue in peace, & accuse me no more. And Esope said, Doe what thou wilt, for whether thou wilt or no, thou shalt shortly set me at liberty. What same time befell a maruailous thing within the Citie of Samie. For as men played there the common & publike playes, as yet they be accustomed to doe in many good citises, an Eagle suddenly flew through all the company of people, and took and bare away with him, the King and seale of the soueraignty and puissance of all that Citie, and let it fall into the pit of a man who was not in liberty: for which deed and token, all the people of Samie maruailed greatly, and there arose a great rumour in the Citie among the people. For much they were doubtfull of some persecution, and wist not what the thing might signifie, wherefore they were in great doubt and heavinesse.

Wherefore incontinent they came towarde Exantus as vnto him which they held for the most sage and wise man of the Citie of Samie, and demanded of him what this maruell signified, and also what was likely to fall thereby. Exantus was ignorant, and knew not the signification of this maruell, whereupon hee demanded of the people time and space for to giue hereupon an answer. Exantus then was in great heavinesse, because he wist not what to say to this thing: and Esope seeing him so heavy and full of sorrow, said vnto him, My Master, why art thou so heavy in thy countenance? leave sorrow and take  
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with thee ioy and gladnes, giue me the charge to answer the Samians, and to morrow thou shalt say to them these words, My Lords of Samie, I am no Diuine, nor interpreter of the maruailous things that be to come, neuerthelesse, I have a seruant in my house, which (as he saith) can tell these things, if it please you, I shall make him come before you, & then by my counsell if I shall satisfie all the fellowship, thou shalt therefore receiue and haue worship, glory and profit; and if I cannot satisfie them, thou shalt be deliuered of great infamy and shame, and I shall be rebuked, & put to great shame: then Exantus having his trust in the words of Eſop, went on the morrow to the great place of Samy and assembled there the people, & went vp on high whereas the Iudge was accustomed to sit: and as he had learned of his seruant Eſop, so hee declared there before the Samiens. The which things when he had said, they prayed him that he would cause his seruant to come before them. And anon Eſop came thither, and as he stood before all the company, all the people present looked and beheld him with great maruell, because he was deformed and crooked of body, & sayd, Lo ke, here is a faire person, able to be a sure diuine, and went and mocked him. And Eſop being then on the highest part of all the place, began to make a signe with his hand vnto all the people, to the end that they should hold their peace and keepe silence: and then he spake vnto them in this manner:

My Lords, for what cause laugh yee and scozne mee for my forme? know yee not, that men must not looke in the face of a man, to see and behold of what figure or forme hee is of, but onely to know wisdom?

come? Also men ought not to take heede of the beſsell, for oft a soule beſsell is full of good Wine. And when the Samians heard these words, they said to Eſop, if thou canst giue vs good counsell for all the wealth of the common people, we all pray thee that thou wilt doe it.

And then Eſop hauing confidence and trust in his wisdom, said thus: Fortune which (loueth dissention) hath this day set and put debate and strife betwene the Lord and the seruant; for he that shall vanquish, shall not be paid nor rewarded after his desert. For if the Lord get the victory, I that am his seruant shall get no libertie as right requireth, but I shall be beaten and cursed, and imprisoned: wherefore if ye will that I giue a full solution of that ye demand, I aske and require you that ye doe make mee free, and set me againe into my libertie, to the intent that with trust, confidence, and audacity, I may speake to you: and I promise and assure you, that I shall shew you (to your profit) the true signification and plaine vnderstanding of this great anger and signe.

And they all said with an equall voyce, hee asketh a thing very reasonable and iust, wherefore Exantus shall make him free, and giue him his libertie as reason is. Which thing when Exantus heard, he refused to doe. And the Lord of the authority publique, said vnto him. Exantus, if thou wilt not obey to the people, I shall by my owne authority, take him out of thy seruice, and shall set him at libertie, and make him equall with thee.

How Esope was restored vnto his liberty by the will of his Master.

**A**nd because that Exantus was required of al his friends, that he should restore and put Esope into liberty, he said to Esope, albeit that it is not my good will, yet I giue thee liberty. And anon he that made the Proclamation, went into every place where such Proclamation should be made, and proclaimed, Exantus had given free liberty to Esope. And when this was done, Esope went into the midst of all the fellowship, and made a signe with his hand, that every one should keepe silence, and after said, my Lords of Samie, the Eagle which is king aboue all other birds, as the king is aboue the people, this bird hath taken away the effect and seale of your Countour: This betokeneth and signifieth, that a King shall aske and demand your liberty, and destroy your lawes. And when the Samians heard these words, they were abashed, and anon came the Pursuant with letters, and demanded after the signet of the Samians. The messenger was brought befoze the counsell of the towne, to whom he presented his letters, containing the sentence following. Crassus king of Lindians to the Senate and common people of Samy, greeting and commanding you, that you do to me obeysance, and pay mee tributes, which if you refuse to doe, I shall put you to death and burne your towne. Whereat the Samians were abashed, and soze feare willing to obey vnto him. But neuerthelesse, first they went to Esope, and prayed him to say thereof his minde. The which said: My Lords of Samie, albeit that I would yet inclined

inclined to obey the King of Lindy, neuerthelesse, to the intent that I may counsel you that which is usefull, and soze the pnblike wealth and profit, I doe you to know, that Fortune in this mortall life, doth shew two things, and two manner of waies: The one is liberty, whereof the beginning is hard and difficult, but the end of it good and easie. The other part is seruitude, whereof the beginning is easie, but the end thereof is sharp & bitter. And when the Samiens heard these words, knowing that they tended to the good of the common wealth, they consented to take y aduice of Esope, and said altogether, because that we be in liberty, we will not be seruants vnto any man: and with this answer sent againe the messenger to Crassus. And when the king heard this answer, hee was wroth and gathered all his men of war, and all the nobles of his realme, and prepared a great armie to destroy the Samiens. The which thing he might haue brought about had not the messenger bin, which said vnto him, Right dear sir, thou maiest not be auenged on the Samiens so long as they haue Esope with them, which in al their affaires and doeds helpeth and counselleth them; wherefoze it is necessary that thou send an Embassadoz vnto the Samiens, that they shall send thee Esope, and that thou wilt pardon & forgiue them their trespasses, soze if thou maiest haue Esope, they of Samy be in thy hands. And the king suddenly sent Embassadors to them of Samy, the which Embassadors applied and set their wits, to shew vnto the Senate of Samy the will of their Lord Crassus: and said that they should send Esope speedily vnto him: and when Esope understood what the king demanded,



deo, hee said to the Samians, My Lords, it pleaseth me well to goe toward the king, but before I goe, I will tell you a fable.

How the Wolves sent their Embassadors to the sheepe.

**I**n time when beasts could speake, the Wolves made warre against the Sheepe, and because the Sheepe might not keepe them, nor hold against the Wolves, they demanded helpe of the Dogges, by the which the sheepe made the wolves to returne backward. And because the Wolves could nor might not get nor haue any prey, nor winne nothing vpon the sheepe because of the dogs that kept them, the wolves on a time sent an Embassador vnto the sheepe, for to haue perpetuall peace with them: and for to haue peace, the Wolves went and demanded, that for to eschew all suspicion, the Dogs should be giuen to the Wolves, or else destroyed for ever. And the Sheepe as fooles, in hope of peace and concord, consented to their demand. And when all the dogs were slaine, the wolves took vengeance vpon the sheepe, as daily appeareth. When Esope rehearseth this fable, the Samians determined among themselves, that Esope should not goe toward the king.

How Esope obeyed not Samians,  
but went toward the King.

**E**sop obeyed not the will of the Samians, but went with the Embassadors towards the king. And when he was come to the kings court, the king seeing that Esope was so deformed, and crooked of body, he was angry and wroth with himselfe, and said with great marvell, Is this same he, for the trust of whom

whom they of Samy would not obey vnto me? Esope then said: Ah right deare Sir and king, certainly I am not come before thy Maiestie by force, but of my good will I am come to thee, trusting so much vpon thy benignity, that thou wilt heare what I shall say vnto thee.

The king gaue him audience, & leaue to say what he would, and thus he began: The other day there was a man which chased the flies, the which man toke a Nightingale, & the Nightingale seeing that he would haue killed her, said to the faulconer, I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me, for to no body I do any harme or danger, for I eate not the corne, nor destroy the fruits of the earth, but giue solace and ioy to all them that goe by the way with my song and voice, and of me shalt thou haue but onely a little carcas: and when the faulconer heard the bird speake these words, he let her go. Wherefore (right deare Sir) I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me which am nought and nothing worth, for to no body I doe harme nor would I doe. And for the defect and febleness of my body, I may not do, but I can speake and say things that bee profitable to them that be in the mortall life of this present world. The king then marvelled and was moued to pittie, and said to Esope, I giue not to thee thy life, for fortune giueth it thee, & if thou wilt haue ought else of me, aske & it shal be giuen thee. When Esope said, I aske nothing of thee, but onely that thou giue me the tribute of the Samians. Well, said the king, I am content. When Esope greatly thanked the king, and after that he composed the fables which be written here in this book,  
and



and to the King he gave them, and demanded of him the letters of the gift, for the remission of the tributes of the Samians, the which were delivered to him by the Kings commandement, and with his good will, and many other gifts: and Esope then tooke his leave of the King, and returned to Samy.

How Esope returned to Samy againe.

**A**fter that Esope was arrived in Samy, the people received him worshipfully, and made great joy at his comming. And Esope commanded the people to be assembled together at a certaine day in the place appointed. And when as Esope was set in the seate, he read vnto them the royall Letters of king Crassus, how he remitted and forgave them the tributes. After this Esope departed from Samy, and would goe sport himselfe through many Regions, nations, and cities, giving ensignments by histories and fables vnto mortall men. Amongst the rest he came to Babylon; & because he did shew there his wisdom, he was received and worshipfully feasted of Lycure king of Babylon. At that time the kings did send one to another playes and problematicks, and such other pleasant devices for their disports: and he which could not interpret them, sent tribute to him that sent them. And because that Esope could interpret them, he taught the king of Babylon the manner of it. After that he composed many fables, which the king of Babylon sent to other kings, and because they could not interpret them, they sent many tributes vnto him, whereby his whole realme was mightily enriched. After that because Esope had no yong children, hee

he adopted a noble young childe to bee his sonne; the which he presented to the king: and he received him as if he had bene his owne sonne, which child was named Enus. This Enus within a little while after medled with the chamberer of Esope, which he held for his wife, and often knew her bodily, and because hee was greatly in doubt that Esope would avenge himselfe, hee accused Esope to the king of diuers crimes and high treason, he also composed false letters, shewing by them to the king, how Esope by fables which he sent here and there, had betrayed him, and that he had conspired his death.

How the King commanded that Esope should be put to death, and how he was saved.

**T**he king Lycure beleening & giuing credit to the accusation made against Esope, was very wroth, and commaunded Horope his Seneſhall that Esope should be put to death. But Horope seeing that his sentence was vniust, kept Esope secretly within a Sepulcher, and all his goods were given to his son which had accused him. Long after this Nactabanus king of Egypt, weening that Esope had certainly been put to death, according to the commandement, sent a proposition problematrick to Lycure king of Babylō, which was as followeth. Nactabanus king of Egypt sendeth greeting vnto Lycure king of Babylō. Because I would edifie & build a tower the which shall not touch heauē nor earth, I pray thee send vnto me Masons to make by the said tower: and this request beeing accomplished, I shall giue vnto thee the tenth tribute of all my

my lands and realmes. And when the King of Babylon heard this demand, he was greatly troubled and wroth, & thought how he might give answer to this question. And when he had called at his sages, for to haue the solution thereof, and found none that could declare the same, the King was more angry then hee was before. And for the great sorrow that he tooke thereof, he fell downe to the ground, and said: Alas, I am miserable, and haue lost the crowne of my realme. Cursed bee he, by whom I made Esope to bee put to death. And when Horope the Seneschall knew the great anguish and sorrow of the King: he said to him, Right deare sir, take no more sorrow in thy heart, but pardon & forgive me, for I made not Esope to bee put to death as thou commandedst me; for wel I wist that yet thou shouldest haue need of him: and doubting to displease thy Maiesty, since that day to this I haue kept him in a Sepulcher. When the King heard this, he was very glad, and anon he rose from the ground where he lay, and went and embraced the Seneschall saying: if it be so that Esope may be found alive, during my selfe I shall be bound to thee, and therefore I pray thee if it be so, let him come to me quickly.

How Esope was brought before the King, and how the King commanded, that he should be put in his former office and dignity againe.

**E**Sop being brought before the King, fell downe at the Kings feet. And when the King saw that Esope looked so pale and ill, hee had of him great pittie, and commanded that hee should bee taken vp and

and newly cloathed. And when Esope was upon his feete, he came before the King, and sal meekly saluted him, and demanded of him the cause why he had been put in prison. When the King said, that his adopted sonne Enus had accused him: and the King commanded that Enus should be punished with such paine, as those deserue that denie the death of their Fathers. But Esope prayed the King hee would forgive him. And when the King shewed Esope the question of the King of Egypt, & when Esope had seene the Letter, he said to the King, Write againe to the King of Egypt, & give to him this answer: That after the winter shall bee passed and gone, thou shalt send vnto him workmen to build and make vp his Towler. And thus hee sent Embassadors to the King of Egypt. After this, the King made all the goods of Esope to be restored vnto him, and he to be put in his first dignity, giuing him full authoritie and might to punish his sonne after his owne will. But Esope benignly receiued againe into his house his adopted Son, and sweetly chastised and corrected him, and said: my sonne, obserue you my commandements, and keepe them in thy memory: For we give well counsaile to other, but for our selues we cannot take it: but because thou art an humane man thou must be subiect to Fortune: Therefore thou shalt first loue God, and keepe thy selfe from the wrath and anger of the King.

And because that thou art an humane man, haue thy care & solicitude on humane things, for God doth punish the wicked folke: also it is no good or heavenly thing to doe any body harme, but shew thy selfe cruell to those that are thine enemies, to the

the end that of them thou be not condemned: and to friends make ioyfull semblance and good chere, to the end that thou maiest haue the moze assurance of their helpe and good will, soz thou oughtest to desire prosperity and welfare to thy friends, and aduersity to all thine enemies. Thou maiest speake saire to thy wife, to the intent that she take not another man; because a woman is variable, and as men flatter and speake saire to her, she is lesse inclined to do any euill. Keepe thee well from the fellowship of the cruel man: soz albeit that he haue good prosperity, yet he is miserable. Stop thine eares, and hold well thy tongue from such talking, and haue no enuy at other mens goods, soz enuy hindereth the enuious. Haue care and regard ouer thy family, and that thou maiest be loned like a Lord, haue shame in thy selfe to doe any thing against reason, & be negligent or retchlesse to learne euery day. Tell not thy counsell to thy wife, spend noz walke not thy goods wilfully, soz better it is to a man to leaue his goods after his death, then to bee a begger in his life. Salute ioyfully such as thou meetest by the way. For the dogge maketh signe of ioy with his taile to such as hee knoweth by the way. Spock no man, neuer hide thy wisdom, & al that thou borrowest giue it againe with good wil: & those which thou maiest helpe, refuse not to doe good to. Keepe thee from euill company: shew to thy friends thy affaires and busines, and beware that thou do nothing whereof thou maiest repent thee afterward: and when aduersity cometh, beare it patiently. Harbour them that be harbourlesse, cloath the naked. A good word appealeth anger. Surely he is happy that may get him

him a good friend: soz nothing is so secretly kept, but one time or other it wil come to light.

How Enus departed from Esope, and went and killed himselfe.

**T**hus with many admonitions did Esope instruct his sonne, and Enus departed and said, that vniustly and without cause he had accused Esope, soz which he was full of heauines and sorow, and went vp to the top of a high mountaine, and from thence cast himselfe downe to the bottome: and thus wilfully he brake his bones and killed himselfe, as he had ever kept euill rule and misgouernance: soz of an euill life cometh an euill end. After this, Esope commanded the Faulconers that they should take foure young Eagles which were not yet forth of their nest. And when Esope had them, hee accustomed them to eate their meate high and low, and each of them had to their fate two children fastened and bound: and as the children list upward, made their meate to come downeward, the young Eagles likewise followed vp and downe to take their meate.

These things thus ordered, and Winter being gone and past, Esope tooke leaue of King Lycure, and with his Eagles and children went into Egypt, and when he was come before the King, the king seeing Esope so deformed and crooke-backed, thought in himselfe that hee was but a beast, and that the King of Babylon mocked him and his person, soz he considered not that a foule vessel might be full of good wine. For men ought not onely to take heede of the vessel, but to that which is in it. Esope then presently kneeled before the king, and right humbly saluted

saluted him : and the King sitting in his Maiestie, saluted him right graciously and benignly saying in this manner: How likest thou me & mine? And Esope answered, Sir, thou seemest to me to be the Sunne, and thy men the beames thereof.

How Esope made solution to the King of Egypt, vpon the question which he sent to the King of Babylon.

**T**he King hauing heard the answer of Esope, greatly marvelled that he was so subtil in his answers & said to him in this manner, Hast thou brought with thee all them that shall edifie and make vp my Tower? I haue said Esope. But first thou must shew vnto me the place where as thou wilt haue it. The King then departed out of the place, and set Esope in a faire field, and said, Seest thou this faire field? it is the place where I would haue my tower. Esope then to each corner of this field laid an Eagle with two children. The children held the meat vprward in the ayre, & the Eagles began to flie after it. And then the children with an high voice began to cry, saying: Bring vs now clay, stone, brick, wood, and tiles, and we shal build vp the Tower. And when the King saw this, hee said to Esope, as by great admiration: What haue ye men in your land which haue wings? Esope said, yea, we haue many such. When said the King to Esope, Thou hast vanquished me by thy reasons & words. But I pray thee answer mee vnto this question. I haue made mares to be brought to me out of Greece, and they haue receiued and bare horses by the help of the horses of Babylon. And Esope then answered him,  
Sir

Sir, to morrow I shall giue you an answer vnto this question. And after that Esope was returned to his lodging, he said in this manner to his seruants: Looke that among you ye get me a great Cat. and the seruants accomplished the will of Esope. When Esope openly befoze the folkes made the Cat to be beaten with rods: and as the Egyptians saw this, they ran anon after the Cat to haue taken him, but they might not: which feate done, the Egyptians went and told the King thereof. And anon the King commanded that Esope should be brought befoze his person. And when Esope was come, the King said vnto him: Come hither, what hast thou done? wottest thou not that the god which is adored and worshipped of vs, is of the figure and likenesse of a Cat? For certaine all the Egyptians worship and adore the Idoll made after the forme and figure of a Cat, wherefore greatly hast thou offended. And Esope said thus to the King: Sir, this false and euill beast, on the night last past, offended against the King of Babylon, for this beast hath slaine a Cocke which he much loued, because he fought so strongly, and sung on the houres of the night. And the King said: Esope, I should neuer haue thought that thou wouldest haue made so great a leasing befoze mee. For it may not be that this Cat should haue gone and come in a night from hence to Babylon. And Esope smiling said to him, Sir, in such manner cometh and goeth to Babylon horses, which the mares brought out of Greece conceived, and bare yong horses. And the King hearing this, praised greatly the wisdom of Esope, and then the King made more of him, and  
more

thus the King granted to him leave. And as Esope travelled through all the Cities of Greece with worship, he shewed his Sapience and Fables, in such wise that he got worship and glory, and was renowned through all the Land of Greece. At the last he came into the Land of Delphy, which was the best prouince in all Greece. The Citizens then of the Citie of Delphy, by their enuy mocked and dishonoured Esope, and Esope said unto them: My Lords, ye be like the wood which is carried on the Sea, for when men see it a farre off, being tossed with the waues, it seemes to be right great, but when men be neere, it appeareth but a small thing. Thus is it of you, for when I was farre from you, I weened that ye had beene the best of all the land, and now I know that ye be the worst. And when the Delphines heard these words, they held a counsell together, and one of them said: Most wise Lord, ye know very well how that this man hath had great glory in all the Cities and places where he hath beene, wherefore if wee take not heede to our selues, he will robbe vs of our great authoritie, and destroy vs. When they imagined how and in what manner they might put him to death, but they durst not attempt it: for the great company of strangers that were then within the Citie. Nevertheless, as they espied one of the servants of Esope making the mares and other geare ready to ride and depart thence, they went and tooke a cup of gold out of the temple of Apollo, and secretly put it into the maw of Esope. Esope then being ignorant hereof, departed from Delphy. But ere he was farre, the traytors ranne after, making great noyse and clamor.

clamor. And Esope said to them, My Lords, why take ye me? And they said, ha these of celestiall ornaments, crook-backed and sacrilegious, wherefore hast thou despised and robbed the temple of Apollo?

How Esope was betrayed, and how he rehearsed to the Delphines the Fable of the

Rat and the Frogge.

Esope hearing this, denied it. And forthwith they unbound the maw, within the which they found the cup of gold: and they went and shewed it before the people. And Esope considering and seeing their malice and wickednesse, and knowing that he could not escape, began to weepe and to be sorrowfull for his fortune. And one of his friends named Demas, seeing Esope thus weeping, comforted him, saying thus: Haue good courage and reioyce thy selfe. And anon the Delphines went and concluded, that they (as a sacrilegious worthy to receiue a villanous kind of death) should take Esope, and cause him to be led to the toppe of a high mountaine, for to be throwne downe from thence head-long. When Esope knew their sentence, he rehearsed to them this Fable, for to withdraw them from their malice, saying, When peace was among all beasts, the Rat and the Frog loved much each other, and the Rat called the Frog to come to dine with her. The Rat said to the Frog, eate of the meate which pleaseth thee best. And when they had eaten enough, the Frogge said to the Rat: Come with mee, and thou shalt fare well at thy supper: and to the end thou maist the better passe the river, thou shalt binde thy selfe to my foote. The Rat

agreed, and anon the Frogge leapt into the water, and drew the Rat after her. And as the Rat was neere drowned, he said to the Frogge, Wrongfully thou makest me to suffer death, but they that abide alive shall avenge this misdeed on thee. And as they were thus drawing, the one toward, and the other backward, a Kite seeing the debate and strife betwene them, tooke them both together and ate them. In like manner ye make me dye wrongfully: but Babylon and Greece shall avenge mee upon you. But yet for all this the Delphines would not let Elop goe, but instead of death they drew and pulled him shrewdly, and in the best manner that hee could, he defended himselfe against them.

How Elope died miserably.

**A**s as Elope was thus fighting against them, he escaped out of their hands, and fled into the Temple of Apollo but all that profited him nothing, for by force and strength they drew him forth of the temple, and then they ledde him wherreas they ment to put him to death. And Elop seeing himselfe to be overpowered, said unto them: My Lords, dread you not your god Apollo? he shall avenge mee on you. Notwithstanding, for all he could say, they brought him to the place where he should dye: and seeing hee could not escape from them, hee began to them this Fable. There was a woman which had a daughter that was a virgin and a foole: the mother prayed oft to her gods, that they would give to her daughter wit and reason. Her daughter was once in the temple, and heard what she said in her prayers: and anon the maide went into the field, & saw a man which filled

led a sacke full of cozne, she came and asked him what he did, and he said: faire daughter, I put wit into this sacke: and shee said againe, alas my friend, I pray thee that thou wilt put some wit into my body, my mother shall pay thee well for thy labour. When hee tooke her and put his wit into her belly, and took her maiden-head from her: and full glad shee returned home to her mother and said to her, Mother, I have found a faire young man, in which hath put witte into me: and her mother hearing these words, wared full of sorrow, and said: My daughter, thou hast recovered all thy wit, but the wit which thou hadst thou hast lost. Likewise to them he rehearsed another fable. There was a husbandman which from his youth to his old age had neuer been in the fields, nor neuer came into any city; hee prayed his master that hee might once see the city, and they sent him in a cart which was drawne with Ases, and said to him, prick well the Ases, and they shall leade thee to the City: and after he had pricked them, there arose a great tempest, wherewith the Ases were soze souled, so that they left their way, and tooke another way, and drew the cart vpon a mountaine top, so that both hee and the cart fell downe to the soote of the hill. And as he saw himselfe falling, he said to Iupiter on this manner, Ah Iupiter, if I offend thee, must I therefore dye so miserably? I am moze grieved at these soule and inuile asses by whom I must receiue death, then if they were faire and good horses. Euen so it fareth with me, for of good men and iust I should not be put to death, but of you which are euill. And as they were come to the place for to cast downe Elope,



he told them another fable in this manner. A certaine man was enamoured of his daughter, whom by force he deuoured, and she said vnto her father, ah father thou art an euill man that hast done to me such a shame, for rather I should haue suffered this crime of a hundred other men then of thee: semblably it is of me, for I had rather suffer death of other men then of you. So they threw him downe from the top of the hill and thus he died miserably.

How the Delphines sacrificed to their gods,  
edified a temple for to please them for  
the death of Esope.

**A**fter, when Esope was put to death, it fell that in their Citie ran a great pestilence and famine, insomuch that they lost all their wits, and for this cause they sacrificed to their god Apollo, to the end to please him for the death of Esope, and became that vniustly and wrongfully they put him to death, they made and edified a temple, and when the Princes and great Lords of Grece had tidings how the Delphines had put Esope to death, they came to Delph to punish them that had put Esope to death.

Thus endeth the life of Esope.

Heere beginneth the Prologue of the  
first Booke.

**R**omulus the sonne of Tibere of the Citie of Antique, greeting. Esope a man of Grece, subtle and ingenious, teacheth in his Fables how men ought to gouerne themselves. And to the end that he might shew the life and customes of all manner of men, he induceth the Birdes, the Trees,

Trees, and the beasts speaking: to the end that man may know wherefore the Fables were sound, in the which he hath written the malice of euill people, and the arguments of Impzobes. He teacheth also to be humble and for to vse good words, and many other faire examples, rehearsed and declared hereafter. The which I Romulus haue translated out of Grecke into Latine, the which if you reade, they shall sharpen thy wit, and giue thee cause of ioy and mirth.

The first Fable of the Cocke and the  
precious stone.



**A**s a Cocke once did seeke his liuing in the dunghil, he found a precious stone, to whom the Cock said, Ha faire stone and precious, thou art here in the filth, and if hee that desireth thee had found thee as I haue done, hee would haue taken thee vp, and set thee in thy first estate, but I in vaine haue found thee, for nothing haue I to do with thee, ne good I may do to thee, ne thou to me. And this fable Esope proposeth to them that read this booke: for by the Cocke is vnderstood a foole, which careth no more for wisdome, then the Cock did for the precious stone: and by this stone is vnderstood this booke.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

**O**f the innocent and of the Wylow, Esope rehearseth this fable. It was so that a Lambe and a Wolfe both had thirst, and went both to the riuer to drinke, the Wolfe dranke aboue, and the Lambe beneath: and as the Wolfe saw the Lambe drinking, he said with



with a high voice, Kneane why hast thou troubled my water which I should now drinke of? Ah my Lord, sauing your grace, the water commeth from you toward me. Then said the Wolfe, hast thou no shame to dread to carie me? The Lambe said, My Lord by your leave. Then said the Wolfe againe: It is not five weekes past since thy father did as much. And the Lambe said I was not then borne. And the Wolfe said againe: thou hast eaten my Father: the Lambe said I haue no teeth. Then said the Wolfe thou art well like thy father, and for this sinne and misdeede thou shalt dye. The Wolfe then tooke the Lambe and ate him. This fable sheweth, that the euil man careth not by what maner he may robbe and destroy the good and innocent man.

Of the Rat and the Frogge.

**N**OW it was so that the Katte went on Pilgrimage, and came by a Riuer, and demanded helpe of the Frogge for to passe over, and then the Frogge bound the Kats foote to her foote, and swam into the midst of the Riuer, and as they were there, the Frog abode still, with an intent to drowne the Kat. In the meane while, a Kite perceiuing it, tooke them both away. Wherefore that man that thinketh deceit, deceit shall come to him.

Of the Dogge, and the Sheepe.

**O**F quarrellers which euer be seeking occasion to doe some harme to the good, Esop giueth vs this fable. There was sometimes a Dog which demanded of a Sheepe a loafe of bread that hee had borrowed of him. The Sheepe answered, that hee neuer borrowed any of him. The Dog made her to answer

swere it before a Iudge. And because the Sheepe denyed the debt, the dog brought with him false witnesse, to witte, the Wolfe, the Kite, and the Sparrowhawk. When the witnesse should be examined and heard, the Wolfe said to the Iudge, I am certaine and remember wel, that the dogge lent her a loafe of bread: the Kite said, He receiued it to present my person: and the Sparrowhawk said to the Sheepe, why deniest thou that which thou hast taken and receiued? thus was the poore Sheepe vanquished. Wherefore the Iudge commaunded her that she should pay the Dog, and to that end, she should doe away before winter her floce of wolle to pay the same. Thus was the poore Sheepe dispoiled. In such manner the euill and hungry people, by their great vnthankfulnesse, robbe and spoile poore folkes.

Of the Dogge and the peece of flesh.

**H**E that coucteth other mens goods, he oft loseth his owne, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. In time past there was a dog which went ouer a bidge, and held in his mouth a peece of flesh, & as he passed ouer the bidge, he perceiued the shadow of his owne selfe, & of his peece of flesh within the water: and he waxing that it had beene another peece of flesh, forthwith thought to haue taken it: and as he opened his mouth, the flesh fell into the water, and thus he lost it. Right so is it with many a one, for when they thinke to robbe other, they leese that which they haue of their owne.

Of the Cow, the Goate, and the Sheepe.

**I**T is accounted for a common saying among men, that the seruant should not presume to eate any plums

plums with his Lord. For to the poore it is not good to haue partage and deuision with him which is rich and mighty, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable. The Cow, the goats & the sheepe, went once a hunting, and tooke with them the Lion, & chased a Hart, and when they came to part it, the Lyon said: My Lords, I let you to wit, that the first part is mine, because I am your Lord: the second, because I am stronger then ye be: the third, because I ran more swiftly then ye did: & whosoener toucheth the fourth part, he shall be my mortal enemy. And thus he tooke from them the Hart. Wherefore this fable sheweth that the poore should not keepe fellowship with the mighty, for he is neuer faithfull to the poore.

Of the Theefe and the Sunne.

**N**o man is changed by nature, but an euill man may well haue a worse issue then himselfe. Esop hereof telleth vs a fable. A theefe held the feast of his wedding, and his neighbours came where the feast was kept, and did worship to the theefe: and a wise man seeing that the neighbors of the theefe were ioyfull and glad, said to them, Ye make ioy and gladnesse of that whereof ye should weepe, take heed then to my words, and vnderstand your ioy. The Sunne would once be married, but all the nations of the world were against him, and prayed Iupiter that he should keepe the Sunne from wedding. When Iupiter demanded of them the cause why they would not haue him to be married: one of them said to Iupiter, thou knowest well there is but one Sunne, and yet he burneth vs all, and if he be married and haue any children, they shall destroy all mankinde: there-  
fore

fore this fable sheweth, that we ought not to reioyce when we are in euill company.

Of the Wolfe and the Crane.

**H**e that doth any good to an euill man, gaineth as Esop saith, for of the good done to the euill, commeth no profit, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. A Wolfe ate and deuoured a sheepe, of whose bones he had one in his throte, which hee could not get out, and soe it grieved him. Wherefore the Wolfe prayed the Crane, that he would draw out of his throat the bone. And the Crane put downe his long neck into his throat, and drew out the bone, whereby the Wolfe was whole. When the Crane demanded of him her reward. And the Wolfe answered, thou art right vnkinde and canst no good, rememberst thou not what I might haue done to thee: for when thou haddest thy necke within my throte, if I would I might haue bit it off. By this fable it appeareth that no good comes from an euill body.

Of two Bitches, how one lodged the other  
in time of littering.

**B**e not hasty to giue credit to the tales of flatterers, for by sweet words they deceiue good people, whereof Esop telleth vs this fable. There was a Witch vpon a time, which would faine litter and be deliuered of her yong ones, and came to the habitation of another Witch, and prayed her by sweet words, that shee would lend her a place where shee might litter her yong ones. And that other Witch lent to her, her bed and her house, weening that shee had therein done well. And when the bitch had littered, the good bitch said to her, that it was time that she

shee should goe and depart out of her house; and then the other bitch and her yong dogs ranne vpon her, and bit her, and cast her forth of her owne house. In this maner many a one for doing good hath hurt and damage.

Of the Man and the Serpent.

**T**here is no good gotten by helping an euill persō, for he that helpeth such, shall surely be ill rewarded for his labour: and he that saucth a thiefe from the gallowes prouideth an enemy for himselfe: wherefore to withstand such. Esop rehearseth vnto vs this fable: There was sometime a man which found a Serpent within a Wine, and by reason of the great frost in the Winter, the Serpent was hard and almost dead for cold, wherefore the good man pittied her, and tooke her vp, and bare her into his house, and laid her before the fire, insomuch that she came againe to her former strength and vigour. And as soone as shee was thus reuiued, shee began to cry and hisse about the house, and to trouble the good-wiife and her children. Wherefore the good man would haue had her out of the house: but when hee thought to haue taken her, she sprung about his necke and had almost strangled him. Euen so it fareth with them that doe good to wicked people, for in stead of loue and kindness, they shall haue malice and enuy.

Of the Lyon and the Ass.

**O**f them that mocke others, Esop rehearseth this fable. There was an Ass which met with a Lyon, to whom he said: My brother God saue thee; and the Lyon shaked his head, and had great paine to with-hold his courage from deuouring the Ass.

**Ass.** But the Lyon said to himselfe, It behoueth not the teeth of so noble a Lord as I am, to bite such a foule beast. For he that is wise, must not hurt the foole, nor heede his words, but let him goe.

Of two Rats.

**F**arre better is it to liue in poverty, then to liue richly being ener in danger: whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There were two Rats, whereof one was great and fat, and held him in the celler of a rich man, and the other was pooze and leane. On a day this great Rat went to sport him in the field, and mette by the way the leane Ratte, of the which he was receiued as well as he could into his poze came o hole, and gaue him of such meate as he had. Then said the fat Rat, come thou with mee, and I shall giue thee other meate. He went with him into the Towne, and both entred into the rich mans celler, which was full of goods, and when they were there, the great Rat presented and gaue to the pooze Ratte diuers daintie meats, saying vnto him: Be metrie and make good cheere; and as they were thus ioyfully eating, the butler came into the celler, and the great Rat ran into his hole, but the pooze Rat wist not whether to flee, but hid him behind the dooze with great feare and trembling, and the butler turned againe and saw him not. And when he was gone, the fat Rat came out of his hole, and called the lean Rat, which was yet in feare, and said: Come hither, and feare not to fill thy belly: but the pooze Rat said, for very loue let me goe, for I had rather eate cozne in the field and liue securely, then to eate dainty fare in such feare as thou doest here in this place. And there-

therefore it is better to live poorly and surely, then to live richly, and without assurance.

Of the Eagle and the Foxe.

**T**he puissant and mighty must doubt the fable, as Esop rehearseth to vs a fable. There was an Eagle which came where yong Foxes were, and tooke away one of them, and gaue it to his yong Eagles to feede them with. The Foxe went after him and prayed him to restore it againe: But the Eagle said he would not, for he was ouer him Lord and master: Then the Fox full of subtilty and malice, began to put together a great aboundance of straw, and laid it vnder the tree where the Eagle and her yong birds were, and kindled it with fire, and when the smoake and the flame began to rise vppward, the Eagle fearing the death of his yong birds, restored to the Foxe her yong one.

Of the Eagle and the Rauen.

**H**e that is well and surely garnished, yet by false counsell may be betrayed, as Esop telleth vs such a fable. An Eagle was sometime vpon a tree, which held in his bill a Nut which he could not breake: the Rauen came vnto him and said, thou shalt neuer breake it vntill thou flie as high as thou canst, and then let it fall vpon the stones; and the Eagle did so, and by that meanes lost his Nut. Thus many haue beene deceiued through false counsell.

Of the Rauen and the Foxe.

**T**hey that bee glad and ioyfull at the praising of flatterers, oft times doe repent them, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs this fable. A Rauen which was vpon a tree, held in his bill a peece of cheese, which the

the Foxe desired much to haue: wherefore he went and praised him in this manner, O gentle Rauen, thou art the gentlest of all other birds, for thy feathers be so faire, so bright, and shining, and canst also well sing; if thou hadst thy voice cleere and small, thou wouldest be the most happy of all other birds. The fowle which heard the flattering words of the Foxe, began to open his bill for to sing, and then the cheese fell to the ground, and the Foxe tooke it vp and ate it. And when the Rauen saw that for his owne glory he was deceiued, hee wared heauy and sorrowfull, and it repented him that he had belceued the Foxe. Wherefore this fable teacheth vs, that we ought not to be glad or reioyce in the words of false and vnfaithfull folke, nor to beleue flatterers.

Of the Lyon, the wilde Bore, the Bull  
and the Asse.

**W**hen a man hath lost his dignity or office, hee must leaue his audacity or hardines, to the end that hee bee not hurt and mocked. Wherefore Esop sheweth such a fable. There was a Lyon which in his youth was very fierce and cruell, and when he was come to age, there came to him a wilde Bore, which with his teeth rent and burst a great peece of his body, and auenged the wrong that the Lyon had done to him before time. After came vnto him a Bull, which smit and hurt him with his hornes: also an Asse came, which smote him in the forehead with her teete in most scornfull manner. And then the Lyon began to weepe, saying within himselfe in this manner, When I was yong and strong, euery one breaded and doubted mee, but now I am olde and feeble

feble, and nare my death, none setteth ought by me, but of every one I am abused: and because that I haue lost my vigour and strength, I haue also lost my dignitie and worship. Wherefore this fable sheweth how we must be meke in prosperitie, lest we be scorned of all men in our aduersitie.

Of the Ass and the yong Dog.

**N**O man ought to meddle with that which he cannot doe. Wherefore Esop rehearseth such a fable, of an Ass which was in the house of a Lord, which had a little Dog which he loued well, and eate vpon his table. And the little Dog tawnd and leapt vpon his gowne, and to all them that were in the house he shewed his loue: wherefore the Ass was enuious, and said in himselfe, If my Lord and his seruants loue this miscreant beast that sheweth loue towards them, by all reason they must loue me if I shew kinde-esse towards them: and therefore from henceforth I will take my disport, and make ioy and play with my Lord and his seruants. And as the Ass was in his thought and imagination, it happened that he saw his Lord entering into the house. The Ass then began to dance: and to make cheere, and to sing with his sweete voyce: and approaching towards his Lord, leapt vpon his shoulder, and began to kisse and lick him. The Lord then began to cry out with a loude voyce, and said, Let this foule whorson that hurteth me so sore be well beaten and put away. When the Lords seruants tooke great stauies, and began to smite vpon the poore Ass, and beate him sore that he had no more courage to dance or leape vpon his Master.

Of

Of the Lyon and the Rat.

**T**H: mighty and puissant must forgive the feble, for oft the little may well giue aide and help vnto the great; whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, of a Lyon which slept in a forest, and the Rats disporting them about him, it happened that they went vpon the Lyon, whereat he awaked, and with his claw he tooke one of them: When the Rat saw her selfe thus taken, shee said vnto the Lyon: My Lord I pray you pardon me, for little shall you winne by my death, and I thought not to displease you. When thought the Lyon with himselfe, that it wers no worship to put her to death, wherefore he forgave her and let her goe. After this, it hapned that the same Lyon was taken in a snare, whereupon he began to cry and make sorrow: and when the Rat heard him cry, he approached, and demanded what he ayled? And the Lyon said: Seest thou not how I am taken and bound with this line? When said the Rat, My Lord I will not be unkinde, but shall ener remember your great mercy toward me, and withall, if I can I shall now helpe you. The Rat then began to bite the cord, and so long gnawed thereon, that the cord brake in sunder, and the Lyon escaped.

Wherefore this fable teacheth, how that a mighty man ought not to despise the little or meane, for hee that cannot hurt by his strength may giue helpe by his diligent endeavour.

Of the yong Kite, and his Mother.

**H**E that ever doth euill, ought not to haue trust that his prayer should be heard. Of which matter Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a kite which

which was sicke, in so much that he had no trust to recover his health. And as he saw himselfe weake and feeble, he prayed his mother that she would pray unto her gods for him. His mother answered him, My son, thou hast greatly offended and blasphemed the gods that now they will avenge them on thee, for thou praisest not to the gods for pittie nor loue, but for feare & dread: for he which leadeth an euill life, & in his dealing is obstinate, ought not to haue hope to be deliuered of his euill. For when one is fallen into extreme sicknesse, then is the time come that he must be paid according to his deeds: for he that offendeth other in his prosperity, shall find few friends when he falleth into aduersity.

Of the Swallow, and other Birds.

**H**E that belieueth not good counsell, shall not faile to be euill counselled, wherefore Esop rehearseth to vs this fable following. A Plowman sowed Linseed, & the Swallow seeing that of the same Linseed, men might haue nets and gins, went & sayd to all other birds: Come ye all with me, and let vs plucke vp this, for if we let it grow, the labourer shall make gins and nets to take vs all: but all the birds dispraised her counsell. When the Swallow seeing this, went and harboured her selfe in the plowmans house. And when the flaxe was growne & pulled vp, the labourer made gins and netts to take birds, wherewith he tooke euery day diners of those birds, and brought them home to his house. Which the Swallow seeing, said, I told you of this before but you would not be warned by me.

The end of the first booke.

The

The Prologue of the second Booke.

**A**Ll manner of fables are found to shew men what they should ensue and follow, and also what they ought to leaue and flee; for Fable is as much to say in Poetry, as words in Theologie. And therefore I write fables, to shew the good conditions of good men: for the Law is giuen for trespassers and misdoers: and because the good and iust be not subiect to the Law, as we finde and reade of the Athenians, which liuing after the law of nature, and also at their liberty, would needs haue a King for to punish all euill: but because they were not accustomed to be enformed, when any of them was corrected and punished, they were greatly troubled when their new King executed any Justice: because that afore that time, they had neuer bene vnder any mans subiection, it was grieuous to them to be in seruitude, wherefore they were sorrowfull that euer they had demanded any King. Against the which Esop rehearseth this fable following.

The first Fable is of the Frogges and of Iupiter.



**N**othing is so good as to liue iustly and at libertie, for freedome and liberty is better then any gold or siluer: whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable: Diuers frogs were in ditches and ponds at their owne liberty, they all together with one consent made request vnto Iupiter, that hee would giue them a King, and Iupiter thereof began  
 3 to



to marnell, and for their King he cast them downe a great piece of wood, which with the fall therof made a great sound in the water, whereof they had great dread and feare; and after as they approached to their King for to make to him obeysance, and perceined that it was but a piece of wood, they turned againe to Iupiter, praying him earnestly that he would give to them another King. When Iupiter gave to them the Heron to be their King. When the Heron entered into the water, and ate them one after another. And when the Frogs sawe that their King did so denoure them, they began to weepe to Iupiter, and to say vnto him: Right high and mightie Iupiter, wee pray thee to deliuer vs from the throte of this Tyrant, which eateth vs one after another. And then said Iupiter to them, the King which ye haue demanded shall be your Master. Wherefore, when men haue that which is conuenient, they ought to be ioyful and glad, and he that hath libertie, ought to keepe it well, for nothing is better then libertie, for libertie should not be sold for all the gold and siluer in the world.

Of the Doves, the Kite, and the Sparhawke.

**H**E that putteth himselfe vnder the safegard or protection of the euill, shall aske helpe of them in time of need, and get none, according to this present fable of the Doves which requested a Sparhawke to be their King, for to keepe them from the Kite, and when the Sparhawke was made King ouer them, he beganne to denoure them: When the Doves said among themselves, that better it were for

for vs to suffer of the Kite, then to be subiects vnto the Sparhawke, and to be martyzed as we be, but hereof we be well worthy, for we our selues are the onely cause of this mischief. Wherefore it is good wisdom for men to thinke well what will be the end, ere they begin any thing.

Of the thiefe and the Dog.

**I**F a man giue any thing, he that receiueth it, ought to take heede to what end it is giuen, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a thiefe that came on a night into a mans house for to haue robbed him, and the good mans Dogge began to barke at him, and then the thiefe did cast at him a piece of bread: and then the dog said to him: thou castest this bread for no good will, but onely to the end that I should hold my peace, to the intent that thou maist rob my Master; and therefore it were not good for mee, that for a morsell of bread I should lose my life, wherefore goe thy way, or else I shall awake my master and all his household. The dogge then began to barke, and the thiefe fled: and thus by couetousnesse many haue receiued great gifts, which haue caused them to lose their heads. Wherefore it is good to consider, and looke well to what intent the gift is giuen, to the end that none may be betrayed by gifts, neither ought any for gifts to worke treason.

Of the Wolfe and the Sow.

**A** Man ought not to beleue all that he heareth, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, of a Wolfe which came towards a Sow, which kept and made sorrow for the great paine that she felt, because she was great with pig. And the Wolfe came to



to her, saying: My sister, make the young pigs secure: for ioyfully and with good will I shall serue and help thee. And the Sow then said to him, go forth on thy way, for I have no need of the helpe of such a servant: for as long as thou shalt stand here, I shall not deliuer me of my charge: for thou desirest nothing else but to haue them and eate them. The Wolfe then went his way, and anon the Sow was deliuered of her pigs: but if she had beleued him, she had a sorrowfull birth. And thus se that foolishly beleueth foolishly it happeneth to him.

Of the mountaine that shooke.

**R**ight so it happeneth, that he that shaketh, hath dread and is fearefull; whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs such a fable, of a hill which began to tremble and shake, because of the Pole that delued. And as the folke saw that the earth began to shake, they were soze afraid, and durst not come nigh the mountaine, but when they knew it was long of the Pole, their doubt and dread was turned to ioy, and they began all to laugh. Wherefore men ought not to beleue all folke which be full of great words: for some men will greatly feare where no danger is.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

**T**he birth causeth not a man so much to get some friends, as doth the goodnesse, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable, of a Wolfe which saw a Lambe among a great herd of Goates, the which Lambe sucked a Goate, and the Wolfe said to him: this Goate is not thy mother, goe and seeke her at the mountaine, for she shall nourish thee moze sweetly and moze tenderly then the Goate will: and the Lambe

Lambe answered him: This Goate nourisheth mee instead of my mother, for she leaueth to me her paps sooner then to any of her owne children, and yet moze better it is for me to be here among these Goates, then to depart from hence, and to fall into thy throat and be deuoured. Wherefore he is a foole, which being in freedom or surety, putteth himselfe in danger of death: for better it is to liue hardly in surety, then sweetly in perill and danger.

Of the old Dog and his Master.

**M**en ought not to dispraise the ancient, nor to put them backe, for if thou be young, thou oughtest to desire greatly to come to be old, also thou oughtest to praise the actes or deedes, which they haue done in their young age, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable. There was a Lord which had a dog, the which in his youth had bene of good kind: as namely, to chase and hunt, and to haue great lust to runne and take the wilde beasts. And when this dogge was come to old age, and that hee could no moze runne, it happened once that he let goe and escape from him a Hare, wherefore his Master was wroth and angry, and in great rage began to beat him. When said the dogge vnto him, My Master, for good seruice thou yeeldest me euill: for in my young age and prosperitie, I serued thee right well, and now that I am come to my old age, thou hatest and settest me backe. Remember, I pray thee, how that in my young age I was strong and lustie, and now when I am old and feeble, thou settest nothing by me. Wherefore, whoso doth any good in his youth, in his old age he shall not continue in the vertues

vertues which he possessed in his youth.

Of the Hares, and the Frogs.

**M**AN say commonly, that as the time goeth, so much folkes goe, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, that he which beholdeth the euill of other, must haue patience of the euill which may come vpon himselfe. For sometimes as a hunter chased through the fields and wood, the Hares began to flee for feare, and as they ran, they passed through a meadow full of frogges, and when the frogges saw the Hares run, they began also to run and flie as fast. When one of the Hares seeing them so fearefull, said to his fellows: let vs be no more so fearefull, for we be not alone in dread, but all these frogs be in doubt as well as we: therefore we ought not to despaire, but trust and hope to liue, and if a little aduersitie come vpon vs, we must endeavour to beare it patiently, for the time will one day come, that we shall be out of all feare and danger. Therefore in the unhappy and vnfortunate time, men ought not to distrust, but euer to be in hope, that a time of better hap will come: euen as peace commeth after warre, and faire weather after raine.

Of the Wolfe and the Kid.

**G**OOD children ought to keepe the commaundements of their parents and friends, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Goate which had littered her yong kidde, and hunger tooke her, so that shee would haue gone into the fields for to haue eaten some grasse, wherefore shee said to her yong kid, My child, beware that if the Wolfe come hither to eate thee, that thou open not the

the doore to him. When the Goate was gone, the Wolfe came to the doore: and the kidde answered him, So hence euill and false beast, for well I see thee through the hole, that to haue mee thou saimest the voyce of my mother, and therefore I shall keepe me wel from opening the doore. Thus good children ought to marke and lay vp in their hearts the precepts of their parents, for many a one is lost and vndone for lacke of obedience.

Of the poore Man and the Serpent.

**H**E that applieth himselfe to do other men harme ought not to thinke himselfe secure, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Serpent which came into the house of a poore man, and liued of that which fell from the poore mans table, for the which thing there hapned great fortune to this man, and he became very rich. But on a day this man was angry against the Serpent, & tooke a sword, and smote at him, wherefore the Serpent went out of the house, and came no more thither againe. A little after, this man fell againe into great pouerty, and then he knew, that by fortune of the Serpent hee was become rich, wherefore it repented him that he had giuen away the Serpent. When he went and humbled himselfe to the Serpent, saying: I pray thee that thou wilt pardon mee the offence that I haue done thee. And the Serpent said: Seeing thou repentest thee of thy misdoings, I forgive thee: but as long as I shall liue, I shall remember thy malice: for as thou hurtedst mee once, so must thou againe. Therefore that which was once euill, shall euer so be held, men ought therefore not to insult ouer him, of whom

whom they receiue some benefit, nor yet to suspect their good and true friends.

Of the Hart, the Sheepe, and the Wolfe.

**A** Promise which is made by force and soz feare, is not to be kept. Whereof Esope rehearseth this following fable. An Hart in the presence of a Wolfe, demanded of a Sheepe that she should pay a bushel of corne, and the Wolfe commanded the Sheepe to pay it. And when the day of payment was come, the Hart demanded of the Sheepe the corne. And the Sheepe said to him. The covenants and promises which are made by force & dreadd, are not to be kept, for it was force to me being besayd the Wolfe, to promise and grantt other, that which thou neuer lentest to mee; therefore thou shalt haue nothing of me. Wherefore it is good sometimes to make promise of some small things, to withstand greater losse: for the things that are done by force, haue no fidelty.

Of the bald man and the fly.

**O**f a little euill may come a greater. Whereof Esope rehearseth this fable. There was a Fly which pricked a man vpon his bald head, and when he would haue smitten her, she flew away, and thus he smot himself, wherat the Fly began to laugh: and the bald man said, euill beast, thou deseruest well thy death, I smote my selfe, wherat thou diddest mocke me, but if I had hit thee, thou haddest surely beene slaine. Wherefore men say commonly, that at the harme of other men, none ought to laugh or lerne, but enuious and scornefully wordes procure many enemies, for which cause it oft hapneth, that a few bad wordes cause great danger.

OF

Of the Foxe, and the Storke.

**N**o man ought to doe vnto others, that which hee would not should bee done vnto himselfe. Of which Esope rehearseth this fable, to wit, of a Fore which requested a Storke to supper, and the For put the meate vpon a trencher, the which meate the Storke might not eat, whereof she tooke great displeasure and departed to her lodging: and because the For had thus deceiued her, she bethought her selfe how she might beguile the fore: for as men say, It is merer to beguile the beguilers. Wherefore the Storke prayed the Fore to come and sup with her, and the Storke put his meate within a glasse, and when the fore would haue eaten thereof hee could not come by it, but onely licked the outside of the glasse, because he could not reach into it with his mouth. And then the Storke said vnto him, take part of such fare as thou gauest mee, so the fore right shamefully departed thence. Thus with the same rod which he made for other, he was beaten himselfe. Wherefore he that beguileth other, must looke to be beguiled againe.

Of the Wolfe, and the mans head.

**S**ome haue more worship then witte, whereof Esope rehearseth a fable of a Wolfe, which found a dead mans head, the which he turned vp and downe with his foote, and said: Ah how faire and pleasant hast thou been, and now thou hast in thee neither wit nor beauty, also thou art without voyce and without thought: and therefore men ought not to behold the beauty and fairenesse of the body, but the goodnesse of the courage: for sometimes men giue glory and worship

worship to some that haue not deserued it.

Of the Iay, and the Peacocke.

**N**One ought to weare another mans rayment, and to be proud thereof as it were his owne, whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs this fable. There was a Iay which decked & arrayed her selfe with the feathers of a Peacocke, and when hee was so deckt, he went and conuersed among the Peacocks: and when he was with them, he began to dispraise his fellows. And when the Peacocks knew that hee was not of their kind, they anon plucked off all his feathers, and beate him in such manner that no feathers abode vpon him, so he fled away all naked and bare: and when his fellows saw him, they said: What gallant cometh here? Where be his feathers which hee had a while agoe? hath he no shame to come into our company? Then all the birds came vnto him and beate him, saying: If thou hadst bene content with thine own rayment, thou hadst not been put to this shame. Wherefore it is not good to weare other mens clothes, for many there are which brag much of that which is not their owne.

Of the Mule, and the Fly.

**S**ome make a great labour which haue no might, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Carter which had a Cart that a Mule drew forth, and because that the Mule went not fast enough, the Fly said to the Mule, Ah lazie Mule, why goest thou no faster? I shall so greatly purre thee, that I shall make thee goe lightly. The Mule answered, God keepe the Mone from the Mules, for I haue no great dread ne feare of thee, but I dread and doubt

for my Master that is vpon me, which constraineth mee to fulfill his will, and more I ought to dread and doubt him, then thee that art nought and of no value ne might. Wherefore men ought not to feare them which are not to be feared.

Of the Ant and the Fly.

**T**o make boast and banting is but vaine glory whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. there was an Ant and a Fly which strined together, to wit, which was the most noble of them both: The Fly said to the Ant, come hether Ant, wilt thou compare thy selfe with me, that dwell in the Kings palace, and eate and drinke at his Table and also I kisse both King and Quene, and the most faire maidens: thou poore and miscreant beast, art euer within the earth. When the Ant answered the Fly saying: How know I well thy vanity and folly, for thou vauntest thee of that whereof thou shouldest be dispraised, for in all places where thou fliest, thou art hated and put out, and liuest in great danger, and as long as Winter commeth thou shalt dye: but I shall abide aloue within my chamber or hole, whereas I eate and drinke at pleasure: for the winter shall not forgive thee thy misdoings but shall slay thee. Thus he that will mocke and dispraise other, ought first to looke well into himselfe, for it is more wisdom to see and amend our owne faults, then to looke into other mens.

Of the Wolfe, the Foxe, and the Ape.

**T**he man that once falleth into any euill fault, he shall liue with dishonour, and in suspicion euer after. And howbeit that in aduenture hee purpose to

doe

do some profitable thing to some other, yet he should not be trusted nor believed, whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs this fable following. There was a Wolfe that said the Fore was an arrant theefe, and a robber of pooze people: and the Fore answered and said that he lyed, and that he was a good and true man, and that he did much good and profit. And then the Ape, which was set as a Judge betweene them, gaue sentence, and said thus to the Wolfe: Come hither, thou hast lost all that which thou demandest: And thou Fore, I beleene well that thou hast vsurped and robbed some thing, howbeit that thou deniest it in iustice: but because that peace may bee betwixt you both, ye shall part together your goods, to the end that none of you both haue any whole part: For hee that is accustomed to robbe and steale, with great paine he may abstaine or restraine himselfe from it, for one beguiler enermoze beguileth another. And because that the Ape found them both guiltie and suspicious, he made them accord and part halfe by halfe. Wherefoze, they that be accustomed to any defraud, deceit, or falshood, shall euer liue in great mistike and suspicion.

Of the Man, and the Weasill.

**M**EN ought well to consider the courage and thought of him that doth good, and to the end wherefoze he doth it, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable, of a man which tooke a Weasill which chased after Kats within his house: And after when he had taken the Weasill, he would haue killed her. When the pooze Weasill saw the wrath and fury of the man, she cryed vnto him for mercy, saying thus:

My

My Lord, I require and pray thee that thou wilt pardon me, and that thou wilt reward mee for the great service I haue done thee, for euer I haue chased the Kats out of thy house. And the man said: thou dost it not for the loue of me, but onely thou hadst done it to fill thine owne belly: for if thou hadst done it for the loue of me, I would haue rewarded thee for it, but because thou dost it not for to serue me, but to let and damage me, for what the Kats could not eate, thou barest away, and being wared sat of mine owne bread, thou must tender and giue to me all the fatnesse which thou hast gotten here, for he that robbeth must be robbed, Iuxta illud: pillatores pillabuntur. For it sufficeth not to do well but men must haue a good intent in doing of it. Wherefoze I will not pardon thee, seeing thou deseruest no mercy, but presently put thee to death.

Of the Oxe and the Frogge.

**T**He pooze man ought not to compare himselfe to him that is rich, as Esop sheweth to vs by this present fable. There was a Frog in a medow which espied a Dre hard by in pasture, and perceiuing the Dre great and her selfe little, she began to swell against the Dre, and said to her children, Am not I now as great as the Dre, and as mighty? and her children said, nay mother, for when we behold the Dre, you seeme nothing like in bignesse to him. At these words the frogge began moze to swell. And when the Dre saw the pride and folly of the frogge, he trod vpon her with his foote, and brake her all to pieces. Wherefoze it is not good for the pooze to compare himselfe with the rich, but rather to content

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him.

whole: and then the Lyon said to the Horse, let me see thy foote; and as the Lyon looked on it, the Horse smote him on the forehead, in such wise that he brake his head, and the Lyon fell to the ground, being hurt so grievously that he could hardly rise againe. And being vp againe, he said to himselfe: Surely I am well worthy of this, for he that seeketh euill, euill cometh to him: and because that I dissembled, and fained my selfe to be a Philicion, whereas I should haue shewed my selfe a great enemy, I therefore haue receiued a meete reward. Therefore euery one ought to shew himselfe plainly as he is.

Of the Horse and the Asse.

**H**E that is fortunate and happy, knowes not how soone hee may be poore and miserable. And therefore none ought to despise the simple, but rather to thinke himselfe may become as meane and poore. Whereof Esop sheweth this fable. There was a great Horse which was well harnessed and apparelled and his saddle richly furnished with gold, this Horse met with a poore Asse sore laden in a narrow way: and because the Asse turned not backe, incontinent the horse said to him, Unmannerly beast, hast thou no shame, bearest thou no reverence unto thy Lord? Who holdeth me now, that I with my foote breake not thy head, because thou giuest not place for me to passe by thee? The poore Asse answered neuer a word, but was sorry: and after that, he would haue beaten him, whereat the Asse still held his peace as wise and sage, and so the Horse went his way. And within a while after, it befell that fortune turned her wheele so downe, that this faire horse became old, leane,

leane, and sicke, and out of all prosperitie, and his master commanded he should be had into the Towne, and in stead of his rich saddle, men should put on his backe a panier for to beare dung to the fields. Now it hapned that the Asse which was in a meadow eating grasse, perceined the Horse, and knew him well, whereof being greatly abashed, hee marvelled much how hee should become so poore and leane. And as the Asse went toward him, hee said, Ha fellow, where is now thy faire saddle, and thy rich bridle garnished with gold? how art thou now become so leane? what hath thy pride profited thee, and the great presumption which once thou didst shew to me? thinke now how thou art leane and vnchristy, and how thou and I bee not of one office. And now the miserable and unhappy Horse was abashed, and for shame looked downeward, and answered neuer a word: For all his felicity was then cleane turned into aduersitie. Therefore, they that be in felicity, ought not to mocke and scoone them that bee in aduersitie, for many haue beene rich, which now are in great povertie and neede.

Of the Birds and of the Beasts.

**N**O man cannot serue two Masters, which bee contrary one to the other, as Esop sheweth in this present fable. On a time the Beasts made great warre against the Birds, and they fought often together. And the Bat fearing the wolues, and that the beasts would banquet them, shee thought in her mind and said to her selfe, We are not able to overcome the Beasts, wherefore I will saue my life and goe take part with them. And when the battaile



was ordained on both sides, the Eagle began to enter into the battel of the Beasts by such a strength, that with the helpe of the other birds he got the field, and vanquished the beasts, wherfore the Beasts made peace with the Birds, and were all of one accord and one will: and for the treason that the Bat had made she was condemned neuer to see the day and neuer to flie but onely by night: and also she was dispoiled of all her feathers. So he that will serue two Masters, contrary one to another, is not to bee accounted iust nor true: and they which leaue their owne masters to serue a stranger, which is enemies to him, are worthy to be punished. For the Gospell saith, no man can serue both God and the diuell.

Of the Nightingale and the Sparhawke.

**H**E that oppresseth the innocent, shall haue an euill end: whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Sparhawke which put her selfe within the nest of a Nightingale, where hee found the young birds. The Nightingale came and perceiued it, wherfore she prayed and required him to haue pittie on her young birds: and the Sparhawke answered and said: If thou wilt that I grant thy request, thou must sing sweetely after my will. And the Nightingale began to sing sweetely, not with the heart, but with the throte onely, for shee was filled with sorrow that otherwise shee might not sing. The Sparhawke said to the Nightingale, this song pleaseth me not, and then he tooke one of the young birds and deuoured it. And as he would haue deuoured another, there came a Hunter, which did cast a pet vpon the Sparhawke, and when he would haue

flowne

flowne away, he might not, for he was taken. And therefore he that hurteth the innocent, is worthy to dye an euill death, as Cain did for killing Abel.

Of the Wolfe and the Foxe.

**F**ortune helpeth both good and euill folke, and all them which she helpeth, no euill hapneth vnto them. But they that set their malice against Fortune, be subuerted & ouerthrowne by her. Whereof Esop rehearseth a fable. There was a Wolfe which had gathered together a great prey of meate, that he might the better lide deliciously, whereof the Foxe had great enuy, and that he might steale some of that meate, he went into the caue of the Wolfe and said to him: My gossip, because that it is long since I saw thee, I am in great heauinesse and sorrow, and also because a long time we haue not bin conuersant together. When the Wolfe knew the malice of the Foxe, he said, Thou art not come hither to see how I fare, but to rob mee. For which words the foxe was angry, and went to a Shepheard, and said: If thou wilt be auenged on the Wolfe which is enemy to thy heard, this day shall I put him into thy hands. And the Shepheard answered the foxe thus: If thou doe as thou saiest, I shall pay thee well for it. When the foxe shewed him the hole wherein he was, and the Shepheard incontinent went thither, and with a speare he killed the Wolfe. By this meanes the Foxe was well refreshed with the Wolfes victuals, but as he returned home, he was deuoured of dogs: wherfore he said to himselfe, because I haue done euill, euill cometh to me: for sinne returneth to his Master, and euill to him that euill doth.



heart gaue him drinke, and when he had drunke, he returned toward the gallowes. This knight came another time to the woman to comfort her, and thre times he did so. And as he was thus going and coming, doubting of no body, in the meane while the hanged man was taken from the gallows: and when the knight was come to the gallowes, and saw his dead man gone, he was greatly abashed, & not without cause, for he was charged with him upon paine of death, that if he were taken away, this knight should suffer death: and incontinent he went to the said woman, and kissed her face, and lay before her as he had bene dead. And she said, my friend, what wilt thou that I doe for thee? Alas, said hee, I pray thee that thou helpe and counsell me at my need, for now because I haue not kept my thiefe well, I must suffer death. And then the woman said, Haue thou no dread my friend, for I will finde a meanes to deliver thee, for we wil take my husband and hang him in stead of the thiefe. When began she to delue, and tooke out of the earth her husband, and at night, she hanged him on the gallowes in stead of the thiefe, and said to the knight: Right deare friend, I pray thee keepe it secret, for we doe it secretly. Thus dead men haue some that sorrow for them, but the sorrow is soone gone and past. They that be alive haue some which dread them, but their dread ceaseth when they be dead.

Of the yong man and the common harlot.

**O**f the common and foolish woman, Esop rehearseth to vs a fable: There was a woman named Thais, which because of her fained loue, was the

the losse and death of many young men. To one that had beat her often before that time, she said: My right deare loue and friend, I suppose that of many a one I am desired and loued: neuerthelesse, I shall set my loue on thee alone, wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt be mine, & I shall be thine, for all thy goods I care not, but for thy sweete body. But he that very well knew the fantasie of the woman, answered her right sweetly, thy will and my will be both one; for thou art she I most desire, and she that I shall loue all the time of my life, if thou no more deceiue me, but because thou hast deceined me in times past, I am the more afraid of thee. But notwithstanding this, thou art much pleasant and faire in the sight of me. Thus the one beguiled the other: for the loue of a common harlot is not to be trusted: thou oughtest therefore to thinke, that the common woman alwaies loneth thy lesser more then thee.

Of the Father and the euill sonne.

**T**he good and wise father, ought to chastise his children in their young age, and not when they are old, for then it is much difficulty to make them bow, as Esop rehearseth to vs a fable, of a Father which had a Sonne, the which did nothing that hee ought to haue done, but euer was going and playing in the towne. And the Father for the misrule of his sonne, bratolled euer, and beat his seruants, telling vnto them a fable of a Plowman or labourer, which bound a Bull by the hornes to an Ore: The Bull would not be bound, but smote strongly at the man with his feete, and lanced at him with his hornes. At the last, being bound, the labourer said to them,

I haue ioyned and bound you both together, to the end that you should doe some labour. But I will that the least of you two, that is, the Bull, be learned and taught of the greatest, which is the Oxe; for I must (saie the labourer to himselfe) binde them thus together, to the end that the Bull which is young, fierce, malicious and strong, smite, ne hurt no body, whereof great danger might come to me. But because I know well that the Oxe shall teach and governe him well, I haue bound them both together. Whereby this fable sheweth vs, that the father ought both to teach and giue good example to the child, and to chastise him while hee is young: for hee that loueth his child, will chastise him.

Of the Serpent and the File.

**T**he Authour, that is to wit, Esop rehearseth vnto vs a fable of two evils, saying, a Serpent entered sometime within the Forge of a Smith, for to searce for some meate for her dinner, it hapned that she found a File, which she began to gnaw with her teeth. When said the File to her, if thou doe bite and gnaw me, yet shalt thou doe me no hurt, but thou shalt hurt thy selfe, for by my strength all the yron is plained, and therefore thou art a foole to gnaw on me: for I tell thee that no euill may hurt ne damage another euill, and so of the hard: for one hard shall not breake another, nor two enuious men shall not both ride vpon one Ass. Wherefore he that is mighty, must loue him that is as mightie.

Of the Wolves and the Sheepe.

**S**uch men as haue a good head and good captaine, sought not to leaue him, for hee that leaueth, repenteth

penteth afterward, as Esop rehearseth to vs this fable, of the Sheepe which had warre and dissenti- on with the Wolves, and because that the Wolves were too strong for the Sheepe, the Sheepe took for their helpe the Dogs & the Weathers also, and then was the battaile of the Sheepe great and strong, and they fought so victoriously against the Wolves, that they put them to flight. And when the wolves saw the strength of their aduersaries, they sent an Em- bassadour toward the Sheepe for to haue peace among them, the which Embassadour said vnto the Sheepe in this manner: If ye will giue vs the Dogs, we shall sweare vnto you, that we shall neuer keepe ne hold warre against you. And the Sheepe answered: If ye will sweare hereto, wee shall be content. And thus they made peace together, but the wolves killed the Dogges which were Captaines of the Sheepe: wherefore, when the little young wolves were growne to their age, they came to each part, and contrined and assembled them together, and all with one accord and will said to their ancestors & fathers: Wee must eate vp all the sheepe. Their fathers answered and said vnto them: wee haue made peace with them: neuerthelesse, the yong wolves brake the peace and ran fiercely vpon the sheepe, and their fathers after them: and thus because that the sheepe had deliuered the dogges to the wolves which were their Captaines, they were all destroyed. Wherefore it is good to keepe well a good captaine, which may at neede succour and helpe: For a true freind at neede, is better then gold; for if the sheepe had kept the dogges with them, the wolves had not deuoured them.

them. Wherefore it is a sure thing to keepe well the love of his Brother and good friend.

Of the Man and the Wood.

**H**E that giveth ayde and helpe to his enemy, is the cause of his owne death, As Esop rehearseth by this fable. There was a man which made an axe, and after he had made it, he asked of the trees a handle for it, and the trees were content to give him one. And when he had made fast the handle to the Axe, he began to cut and throw downe to the ground all the trees: wherefore the Duke and Ash said: if we be cut it is but right and reason, for of our owne selfe we be cut and throwne downe. And that it is not good for one to put himselfe into the danger and subiection of his enemy, as thou maiest see by this present fable. For men ought not to give the Staffe by which they be beaten.

Of the Wolfe and the Dogge.

**L**iberty or freedom is a pleasant thing, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable. A Wolfe and a Dogge by chance mette together. And the Wolfe demanded of the Dogge how he came to be so fat? the Dogge answered: I have well kept my Lords house, & have backed at the sheeves which came into my masters house: Wherefore hee and his men give me plenty of meate, whereof I am faire and fatte. And the Wolfe said to him, It is well said my brother, and surely seeing thou farest there so well, I have a very great desire to dwell with thee, to the intent that thou and I may both dine together. Well said the Dogge, come then with me, if thou wilt be at thy ease as I am, and have no dread, nor doubt of any thing.

Then

When the Wolfe went with the Dogge, and as they went by the way, the Wolfe beheld the Dogs necke which was all bare of haire, and demanded of the dog and said, My brother, why is thy necke so bare? and the dog said, it is by reason of my great collar of yron, to the which daily I am fastned, and at night I am unbound for to keepe the house the better: then said the wolfe to the Dogge, I that am in liberty, will not be put in such subiection to be bound & need not, and therefore if thou beest accustomed thereto, and likest well of it, continue so still and spare not, for I will not leaue my liberty to fill my body. By which we learne, that liberty is more to be regarded then wealth.

Of the hands, the feete, and the belly.

**H**ow shall one doe any good to another, which can doe no good to his owne selfe? As thou maiest see by this fable of the feete and the hands, which sometime had great strife with the belly, saying, all that we may or can get by our labour, thou eatest it, and yet thou doest no good, wherefore thou shalt have no more of vs, but we wil let thee dye for hunger. And when the belly was soze hungry, shee began to cry out, alas I dye for hunger, give mee somewhat to eate: and the feet and hands said, thou gettest nothing of vs. And because that the belly might have no meate to sustaine it, the conduits thorough the which the meate passeth, became small and narrow, and within few dayes after, the feete and hands thorough the feeblest which they felt, would then have laboured to get meate for the belly, but it was too late: for by so long fasting, the conduits were

were ioyned together, and therefore the limbs might do no good to other, that is to wit, the belly. And he that governeth not well his belly, with great paine hee doth hold the other limbes in their strength and vertue. Wherefore a seruant ought to serue well his Master, to the end that his Master hold and keepe him honestly, and to receiue good reward of him when his Master shall see his faithfulness.

Of the Ape and the Foxe.

**O**f the poore and the rich, Esop rehearseth a fable, of an Ape which prayed a Foxe to lend him some of his tayle, for to couer his buttocks therewith, saying thus to him, What doth thy long taile auaille thee: it auaileth thee nothing, but letteth thee: and that which letteth thee may be good for me. The fox said I would that it were yet longer. For rather I would see it all soule and dagled, then it should beare to thee any such honour as to couer thy soule buttocks therewith. Come not therefore away the thing that thou hast neede of, lest thou want it afterward thy selfe.

Of the Merchant and the Ass.

**M**any be tormented after their death, where more men ought not to haften their owne death, as Esop rehearseth by this fable of a Merchant which ledde an Ass laden into the market: and to be soone at market he beat the Ass and soze pricked him, wherefore the poore Ass wished and desired his owne death, weening that after his death he should be at rest. And after he was well beaten he dyed. Then his Master made him to be flaine, and of his skinned he made Labours which be

be enen beaten. And thus what paine so euer men haue during their life, they ought not to desire nor wish their death. For many there be that haue great paine in this world, that shall haue greater in another world: for a man hath no rest for death, but for his merits.

Of the Hart and the Oxe.

**O**ne by saying none is assured to escape the danger from which hee flyeth, as is shewed by this fable. There was a Hart which ranne before the ooges, to the end that he should not be taken, and he fledde into the first towne that he found, and entred into a stable wherein were many Dren, to whom he declared the cause why he was come thither, praying them that they would saue him. And the Dren said thus to him: Alas poore Hart, thou art among vs euill rescued, thou wouldest be more sure in the fields, for if thou be perceined, or scene of our Master, certainly thou art but dead. Alas for pittie said the Hart, I pray you that you will hide me within your racke, that I be not perceined, and at night I shall goe hence, and shall put my selfe into a sure place. When one of the seruants came to giue hay to the Dren, and when hee had done he went away, and saw not the Hart, whereat the Hart greatly reioyced, weening that he had escaped the perill of death, wherefore he rendred thanks to the Dren. But one of the Dren said to him, It is easie to escape out of the hands of the blind but it is hard to escape from the hands of them that may well see. For if our Master come hither, which hath aboue an hundred eyes, certainly thou art but dead, if he perceine thee. And

The first Fable maketh mention of the  
Fox and the Raisins.



**H**is not wise which desireth any thing that he may not haue, as rehearseth this present fable, of a Fox, which beheld the Raisins that grew vpon a Vine, which he greatly desired. And when he saw that hee could get none, he turned his sorrow into ioy, and said, these Raisins be so wye, and if I had some I would not eate thsm. Therefore he is wise that saimeth not to desire the thing that he would willingly haue.

Of the Weill and the Rats.

**I**t is better for a man to haue witte then strength as Esope sheweth by this fable. There was an old Weill which might no more take Rats, wherefore she was often hungry, & thought that she would hide her selfe within the floore to take the rats which came to eate it. And as the rats came to the floore, she tooke and ate them one after another. And as the oldest rat of all perceived her malice, he said thus in himselfe, certainly I shall keepe me well from the, for I know well thy malice and falshood. Therefore he is wise that escapeth the malice of his enemy by wit rather then by force.

Of the Wolfe the Shepheard, and the Hunter.

**M**any tolke shew themselves good in wordes, which are full of great fantasies, as Esope sheweth by this fable. There was a Wolfe which

which fledde from a Hunter, and as he fled he met a Shepheard, to whom he said, my friend, I pray thee tell not to him that followeth me, which way I am gone: and the Shepheard said to him, feare nothing I shall shew to him another way, when the Hunter came, he demanded of the Shepheard which way the Wolfe went. The Shepheard both with his head and eyes shewed the hunter the place where the Wolfe was, and with his hand and tongue shewed the contrary. But the Wolfe perceiuing well all the false dealing of the Shepheard, fled away and escaped. And within a while after, the Shepheard met the Wolfe, and said to him: pay mee for that I kept thee secret. And the Wolfe answered, I thanke thy hands and tongue, & not thy head ne eyes, for by them I should haue bene betrayed if I had not fled away. Therefore men must not trust him that hath two tongues, for such are like the scorpion, which healeth with his tongue and hurteth with his taile.

Of the goddesse Iuno, the Peacocke,  
and the Nightingale.

**E**very one ought to be content with nature, and such goods as God hath sent them, to vie them iustly, as is rehearsed vnto vs by this fable: There was a Peacocke which came to the goddesse Iuno & said vnto her, I am very heauy and sorrowful, because I cannot sing as well as the Nightingale, for every one mocketh and scorneth mee because I cannot sing. Then Iuno to comfort him, said: Why saie soyme and beauty is of farre greater worth, and more to be praised then the song of the Nightingale, for thy feathers and thy colours be resplendishing, like

unto the precious Emerald, and there is no Bird whose feathers are so faire and beautifull as thine be: the Peacocke notwithstanding said to Iuno, all this is nothing saying I cannot sing. When Iuno spake againe thus to the Peacocke to content him, saying, This is the disposition of the gods, which hath giuen to euery one a ieuerrall property and vertue, as they thinke mee'e themselves: and as they haue giuen to thee faire beaue y and goodly feathers, so haue they giuen unto the Pighingale sweet and pleasant song, and to all other Birds their proper qualitie. Wherefore euery one ought to be content with that he hath, for the miserable couctous man, the more goods he hath, the more he desireth.

Of the Panther and the villaines.

**E**uery one ought to doe well to the stranger, and to forgiue the miserable, as Esop rehearseth by this fable following. There was a Panther which fell into a pit, & when the villaines of the Country saw her, some of them began to smite her, and other said, forgiue and pardon her, for she hath hurt no body; and there were other that gaue to her bread, and another that said to the villaines, beware you slay her not. And because they were all of sundry minds, euery one of them went home againe, warning that she should dye within the said pit, but by little and little she climed vp, and went her way. Within a while after, she hauing in memory the great iniury that had bene done to her, went againe to the place where she had bene soe beaten, and began to kill and slay all the beasts thereabout, and put the shepheard and swineheard, and other which kept beasts

beasts to flight, she likewise burnt their cozie, and did many other euils there-about. And when the folkes of the Country saw the great damage that she did to them, they came toward her praying her to haue pittie on them. To whom shee answered in this manner, I am not come hither to take vengeance on them which haue had pittie on me, but only on them which would haue slaine mee. And for the wicked and euill folke I recite this fable to the end that they hurt no body, for if the villaines had taken pitie, one as well as another of the pooze Panther, when shee was in the pit, the foresaid euill had not hapned unto them.

Of the Butchers and the Weathers.

**T**hat linage of kindred which is different in diuision, shall not doe any thing lightly to their profit, as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Butcher which entred into a stable full of weathers, and when the weathers saw him, none of them said a word. The butcher tooke the first he found, then the weathers spake all together and said, Let him do what he will, and thus the Butcher tooke them all one after another saue onely one. And as he would haue taken him, the pooze weather said, Justly am I worthy to be taken, because I haue not holpe my fellowes: for he that will not helpe others, ought not to looke for helpe of others: wherefore vertue vnted is better then vertue separated.

Of the Faulconer and the Birds.

**T**he wise ought euer to keepe good counsell, and in no wise ought they to doe the contrary, as rehearseth this fable of the birds which were tosell



and glad when the prime time came, because their nests were then couered all with leaues. Incontinent they beheld and saw a faulconer which dyest and laid his laces and nets for to take them, and then they said all together: yonder man hath pittie on vs, for when he beholdeth vs, he weepeth. And the Wartrich which had often experimented all the deceits of the said faulconer, said to them: keepe ye all well from the said man, for he seekeith nothing but the manner now to take you, and when he hath taken you, he wil eate & deuoure you, or else beare you to the market & sel you: and as many as beleued his counsell, were saved. Wherefore they that sco:ne good counsell, are woorthie to fall into danger.

Of the true man, the Lier and the Ape.

**M**any men in time past, prayed more the people full of leadings then them that told truth, which thing raigneth with some vnto this day, as wee may vnderstand by this present fable, of a true man and a lye, which went both together thorow the country, and so long they went together in their iourneyes, as they came to a Prouince of Apes, and the King of Apes made them to be taken and brought before him: he being set in his maiesty, like an Emperour, and all his Apes about him as subiects be about their Lord, demanded of the Lye and said, Who am I, and the lye flatteringly said vnto him, Thou art Emperour and king, and the fairest creature that is vpon the earth. Then the King demanded of him againe: Who be these that be about me? and the lye answered, Sir they be your knights and your subiects, to keepe your person and your

your realme. Then the King said, thou art a good man, I will that thou be my great Steward of my household, and that euery one beare to thee honour and reuerence. When the true man heard all this, hee said in himselie, if this man for making of lyes be so greatly aduanced, then by great reason I shall bee more worshipped if I speake truth. Then the King asked the true man and said: Who am I, and all that be about me? then the true man answered: Thou art an Ape, & a beast right abominable, and all they which are about they, are like vnto thee. When did the King command he should be torne with teeth and clawes, and cut all in pieces. And therefore it hapneth oft, that lyes be aduanced, and true men set low, yea many times for saying the truth, men lose their liues, which thing is against all iustice and equitie.

Of the Horse, the Hunter, and the Hart.

**N**one ought to put himselfe in subiection, for to sauenge him on other, for better it is not to submit himselfe, then to be submitted: as Esop rehearseth by this fable following. There was an Horse which enuied an Hart, because hee was fairer then hee. This Horse through enuy went vnto an Hunter, to whom he said in this manner: If thou wilt beleue me, we shall this day take a good prey: leape vpon my backe, and take thy sword, and we shall chase the Hart: and thou shalt kill him with thy sword, and so thou maiest eate him and sell his skinne. And then the Hunter moued by auarice, demanded of the Horse saying, Thinkest thou indeede wee may take the Hart of whom thou speakest to mee? And the



the Horse answered thus, Assure thy selfe of it, for hereto shall I put all my diligence and strength, leape on my backe, and doe after my counsell: and then the Hunter leapt vpon the Horse, and began to runne him after the Hart; and when the Hart saw him come hee fled, but by reason that the Hart ran faster then the horse did, he escaped from them and saved himselfe. And when the horse felt himselfe very wearie, and that he might no more runne, he said to the hunter in this manner, light from my backe, for I may beare thee no more, and I haue missed of my prey. When said the hunter to the horse, seeing thou art entred into my hands, thou shalt not yet escape from me thus, thou hast the bridle in thy mouth, whereby thou maist be kept still and restrained, and though thou wilt leape, the saddle shall keepe me, and if thou wilt cast thy feete from thee I haue good spurres to constrain thee and make thee to goe whether thou wilt or no, where I will haue thee: therefore keepe thy selfe well, that thou shew not thy selfe rebellious vnto me. It is not good therefore for a man to put himselfe in subiection to another, that thereby he may be auenged of his aduersary, for whoso submitteth himselfe vnder the might of another, is bound to doe his will.

Of the Ass and the Lyon.

**G**reat callers by their high and loud cry, suppose thereby to make folke afraid, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was an Ass which sometime met with a Lyon, to whom he said: Let vs both goe vp to the top of a mountaine, and I shall shew thee how the beasts be afraid of me: and the Lyon began to smile, and answered the Ass, goe  
we

we my brother: and when they were vpon the toppe of the hill, the Ass began to cry, and the Foxes and Hares began to flee. When the Ass saw them flee, he said to the Lyon, seest thou not how the Beasts dread and doubt me? The Lyon said, I had also been fearefull of thy voyce, if I had not knowne verily that thou art but an Ass. Wherefore men need not to doubt him which aduanceth himselfe to doe that hee cannot doe. Neither need men to feare a foole for his noise, nor his great voice.

Of the Hawke and other birds.

**T**he hypocrites make to God a beard of straw, as in this fable of a Hawke, which sometime fained that he would celebrate a natiuitie, or hold a very great feast, the which should be kept within a temple: and vnto this feast and solemnitie, he inuited and summoned all the small Birds, to which they came. And incontinent as they were all come to the feast, and entred into the temple, the Hawke did shut the gate, and put them all to death one after another. Wherefore this fable sheweth vnto vs, how we must keepe our selues from all them which vnder faire seeming haue a false heart, for those be hypocrites, and deceiuers of God and the world.

Of the Fox and the Lyon.

**H**e is well aduised that taketh warning by the perill of other men, as this fable sheweth, of a Lyon which sometime fained himselfe sicke, & when the beasts knew that the Lion was sicke, they would goe all to visit and see him as their King, and incontinent as the beasts entred into his house to see him, he deuoured them. And when the Foxes were come

the ground beside the fote of the Cammell; and then said to the Cammell, I haue pity of thee, and am come downe from thy backe, because I would no more be burdensome vnto thee. And the Cammell said to the Fly, I thanke thee, howbeit I am not soe laden of thee. And therefore, of him which may not greatly hurt, little estimation is to be made.

Of the Ant, and the Creet.

**N**ecessary it is for every man to provide for himselfe in summer, such things whereof he shall haue need in winter, as thou maiest see by this present fable. There was a Creet which in the winter time demaunded of the Ant some corne to eat. And then the Ant said to the Creet, what hast thou done all the summer last past? and the Creet answered, I haue sung. Then said the Ant, Of my Corne thou gettest none: for if thou haue sung all the Summer, goe dance all the winter. By which we learne, that there is a time ordained for labour, as well as a time for rest. For hee that will not worke when he should, shall want when he would not.

Of the Pilgrim, and the sword.

**O**f euill man may be cause of great perill and losse to many folkes. As Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was a Pilgrime which by chance found in the way a sword, and he asked of the sword, what is he that hath lost thee? And the sword answered to him, One man alone hath lost me, but many a one I haue lost. And therefore an euill man may well be lost, but ere he be lost he may well let many a one. For by an euill man, may come into a country many euils.

Of

Of the sheepe and the Crow.

**N**One ought to doe injury, nor despise the poore innocents or simple ones: As rehearseth this present fable of a Crow, which set her selfe on the backe of a sheepe. And when the sheepe had bozned her a great while, she said to her, thou shalt keepe thy selfe well to set thee vpon a dogge. Then the Crow said to the sheepe, thinkest thou not poore innocent, but that I wot well with whom I play? for I am old and malicious, and my kinde is to harme all innocents, and to be a friend vnto the euill. Wherefore this fable sheweth, that there be folke of such kinde as they will do no good worke, but onely let and hinder the innocent and simple.

Of the Tree, and the Reede.

**N**One ought to be proud against his Lord, but to humble himselfe vnto him, as rehearseth this present fable, of a great Tree which would neuer bowe for any wind, and the Reede which was at his foot, bowed euery way euen as the winde pleased. Whereupon the Tree said to the Reede, Why dost thou not stand still as I doe? And the Reede answered, I haue not the might that thou hast. And the Tree said to the Reede proudly, then haue I more strength than thou. And anon after, there came a great wind which threw downe the said tree to the ground, and the Reede abode by still. Thus wee learne hereby, that the proud ere they be aware are suddenly throwne downe, and the humble many times are exalted.

The end of the fourth Booke.

Here

Heere beinmeth the fift Booke, whereof the  
frit Fable is of the Mule, the Wolfe,  
and the Foxe.

**M**en call many folke Asses that be very sub-  
le and wise, and many thinke themselves  
wise, which desecue to bee accounted asses,  
as appeareth by this fable: there was a Mule  
which ate grasse in a meddow nere a great For-  
rest, to whom came a fore, which demanded of  
him and said: What art thou? And the Mule an-  
swered, I am a beast. And the fore said, I doe not  
aske that of thee, but I aske who was thy fa-  
ther: and the Mule answered, My great father  
was a Horse. And the fore said againe, I doe not  
aske that, but onely that thou tell mee what is thy  
name. And the Mule said, I know not, because I was  
little when my father dyed: neuerthelesse to the  
end that my name should not be forgotten, my fa-  
ther made it to be written vnder my left foote be-  
hind, wherefore if thou wilt know my name, looke  
vnder my foote. And when the fore vnderstood the  
fals hood of the Mule, hee went againe to the Forrest  
and met the Wolfe, to whom he said: O a miscreant  
beast, what doest thou here? come with me, and in-  
to thy hands I shall put a good prey to fill thy belly.  
Looke in yonder meddow, and there thou shalt finde  
a good fat beast, with that which thy hunger may  
bee satisfied. The Wolfe went presently into the  
meddow, and finding there the Mule, hee said vnto  
him in this manner: Who art thou? and the  
Mule

Mule answered the Wolfe, saying, I am a Beast.  
The Wolfe said to him, that is not the thing which  
I aske of thee, but tell me how thou art named. The  
Mule said, I wot not, but neuerthelesse, if thou wilt  
know my name, thou shalt finde it written vnder  
my left foote behinde. When the Wolfe said, I pray  
thee shew it me, and the Mule lift up his foote and as  
the Wolfe looked thereon, the Mule gaue him such a  
stroke there-with on the fore-head, that almost the  
braines fell out of his head. And then the fore, which  
was behind a bow and saw all the matter, began to  
laugh, and mocke the Wolfe, saying: Thou beast,  
thou wottest well that thou canst not reade, where-  
fore euill thereof is come to thee, thy selfe being cause  
of it. For none ought to take vpon him the thing  
which he cannot doe, lest by shewing his ignorance  
he be willing to be mockt for his labour.

Of the Bore and the Wolfe.

**T**here are some that presume for to be great per-  
sons; and dispraise their owne parents, which  
at the last doe become poore, and fall into great disho-  
nour: as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a  
Bore among a heard of Swine, and for to haue do-  
minion and lordship ouer them, he began to make a  
great rumor, and shewed his great teeth to make the  
other swine afraid: but because they knew him, they  
set nought by him, wherefore he was much displea-  
sed; and went thence vnto the heard of Sheepe and  
Lambs. And when he was there, he began to make  
a great rumor, and shewed them his great teeth. And  
when the Lambes heard him, they were very much  
afraid, and began to shake for feare. When said the  
Bore

**B**oze within himselfe, Here is the place wherein I must abide and dwell, for here I shall be greatly worshipped, for every one quaketh for feare of me. When came the wolfe thither for to haue gotten some prey, and the lambes began to flee: but the boze as proud would not stir him, ne goe from the place, because he supposed himselfe Lord, but the Wolfe took him, and bare him into the wood for to eate him. And as the wolfe bare him, it happened that he passed before the heard of swine which the boze had left, and when the boze perceined and knew them, he cryed aloude and prayed them for Gods loue that they would help him saying that without their help he was but dead. And then the swine all with one consent, went and reconred their fellows, and slew the Wolfe. When the Boze was thus deliuered, & saw himselfe among the swine, he began to haue shame, because he was thus departed and gone from their fellowshippe, and said to them, My brethren and friends, I am well worthy to suffer this paine, because I haue gone and departed from you. Wherefore, he that is well, ought so to keepe himselfe, for many by pride couet to be great Lords, and oft fall thereby into great povertie.

#### Of the Foxe and the Cocke.

**O**ftentimes much speech hurteth, as rehearseth this fable. There was a Fox which came to a Cock and said, I would faine know if thou canst sing as well as thy father could. And the Cocke shut his eyes and began to crow and sing. And then the Fox caught him and carried him away. And the people of the towne cried & said, The Fox beareth away the Cocke.

rocks. When the cock said thus to the Fox, My Lord, vnderstandest thou not that the people say, thou bearest away their cocke, tell to them that it is thine and not theirs. And as the Fox said, It is not yours but mine, the Cocke escaped from the foxes mouth, and flew vp into a tree, and then the Cock said to the fox, Now thou liest, for I am theirs and not thine. And then the Fox began to hitte the earth both with his mouth and head, saying, Pouth thou hast spoken too much, thou mightest haue eaten the Cocke, had it not beene for thy many words. Thus we see that ouermuch talking letteth, and too much crowing smareth. Keep thy selfe therefore from ouer many words, lest afterward it repent thee.

#### Of the Dragon and the Labourer.

**N**One ought to render euill for good, and they that helpe, ought not to be hurt, as this fable sheweth, of a Dragon which was within a riuer, and as the riuer was diminished of water, the Dragon abode at the riuer, which was all dry, and thus for lacke of water he could not stirre him. A labourer or villaine came that way, and demanded of the Dragon, saying: what doost thou here? and the Dragon said, here I am without water, without the which I cannot mooue, but if thou wilt bind me, and set me vpon thy Asse, and lead me into a riuer, I shall giue thee abundance of gold and siluer: and the villaine for couetousnesse bound him and led him into the riuer: and when he had vnbound him, hee demanded of him his salary or payment. The Dragon said to him, because thou hast vnbound mee thou wilt be payde, and because that I am now hungry, I will eate thee: and

Simple, for some are supposed to be wise, and yet are very fooles.

Of the Hee Goate and the Wolfe.

**H**E that is feeble, ought not to arme himselfe against the strong, as rehearseth this fable, of a Wolfe which sometime ranne fast after a hee Goate, and the hee Goate for to save himselfe leapt upon a rocke, and the Wolfe besieged him. And after when they had dwelled there two or three dayes, the Wolfe began to waite hungry, and the goate to have thirst. And thus the Wolfe went for to eate, and the Goate to drinke. And as the Goate dranke, he saw his shadow in the water, and beholding his shadow, said thus within himselfe, Hast thou so faire legges, so faire a beard, and so faire hornes, and hast feare of the Wolfe? If it happen that he come againe, I will charge him well, and keepe him well, and hee shall have no charge over me. And the Wolfe which held his peace, and harkned what hee said, took him by one of his legges, saying thus: what words be these that thou doost say brother hee Goate? And when the goat saw that he was taken tardy, he thus answered the Wolfe, My Lord, I say nothing. have pittie on me, I know well that I have offended: notwithstanding, the Wolfe tooke him by the necke and strangled him. Wherefore it is a very great folly for those that are feeble, to make any warre against the mighty.

Of the Wolfe and the Ass.

**N**One ought to beleue lightly the counsell of him whom he mindeth to hurt, as ye may see by this fable. There was a Wolfe which mette with an Ass, to whom hee sayd, My brother, I am hungry,

hungry, wherefore I must needs eate thee. And the Ass answered him right gently. My Lord, with me thou maist doe what thou wilt, for if thou eatest me, thou shalt put me out of great paine: but I pray thee if thou wilt eate me, that thou vouchsafe to eate me out of the high way: for well thou knowest that I bring home raisins from the Vine, and the corne from the fields, also thou knowest that I beare home the wood from the Forrest, and when my Master will edifie some building, I must goe fetch the Stones from the mountaine, and also I beare the corne to the mill, and after I beare home the meale, and briefly I was bozne in a cursed houre, for to all paine, and to all labour I am subiect: for the which I would not that thou shouldest eate me here in the high way, for the great shame that might come thereof to me: but I instantly require thee, that thou wilt heare my counsell, namely, that we go into the Forrest, and thou shalt bind me by the best as thy servant, and I shall bind thee by the necke as my master, and thou shalt leade me before thee into the wood wheresoever thou wilt, to the end that there thou maiest more secretly eate me. To this the Wolfe accorded, and said, I am willing to doe so. And when they were come into the Forrest, they bound each other in the manner as is aforesaid. And when they were bound, the Wolfe said to the Ass, goe whither thou wilt, and goe before to shew the way, and the Ass went before, and led the Wolfe into the right way of his masters house. And when the Wolfe began to know the way, hee said to the Ass: we goe not the right way. To the which the Ass answered, My Lord, say not so, for cer-

serpent, and waining that the serpent had said so to deceine him, he sowed as much cozne and other grain as he might, and it hapned that the Summer next following was such as is aboue said, therfore the man was beguiled, soz he gathered the same yere nothing. The next yere following, the said labourer went againe soz to eare his ground: and as the serpent saw him come, hee demanded of the labourer in this manner: My friend, whither goest thou? Then answered the labourer, I goe to eare my land. Then said the serpent, My friend, sow not too much, ne too little of cozne and other graine, sow betweene both. Nevertheless, beleue not him vnto whom thou hast done euill: and I tell thee that this yere shall be moze temperate and fertile of all manner of cozne that thou sowest. The labourer had no sooner heard these words, but forthwith he went his way, and did as the serpent had said, and that yere he gathered much good, because of the good disposition of the time. And on a day the same yere, the Serpent met the same labourer comming from haruest, vnto whom hee said, Now say my friend, hast thou not found this yere great plenty of good, as I told thee befoze? And the labourer answered, yea certaine, whereof I thanke thee. And then the serpent demanded of them remuneration, or reward. And the labourer demanded what he would haue, the serpent said, I demand of thee nothing, but only that to morrow in the morning thou send me a dish full of milke by some of thy children. And then the serpent shewed the labourer the hole of his dwelling, and said vnto him, Tell thy sonne that hee bying the milke hither, but

but take heed to that the other, while I told thee that thou belouest not him to whom thou hast done euill. And anon after, when these things were sayd, the labourer went homeward, and in the morning he tooke his sonne a dish full of milke, and he carryed it to the serpent, and set it befoze the hole; and the serpent came out, and slew the child with his venome. And when the labourer came to the field, passing by the hole of the said serpent, he found his sonne lying dead vpon the ground. When the labourer began to cry with a loud voyce, as one full of sorow or heavynesse, saying: O a cursed & euill serpent, venomous and false traytor, thou hast deceiued me. A wicked and deceitfull beast, full of contagious euill, thou hast slaine my sonne. And the serpent said vnto him, I will well that thou know that I haue not slaine him sorrowfully, ne without cause, but soz to auenge me of the hurt that thou hast done to me without cause, and hast not amended it. Rememberst thou not how oft I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not beleue him vnto whom thou hast done euill? Remember it now that I am auenged of thee. This Fable sheweth, how men ought not to beleue or giue any credit to them to whom they haue done some harme in time past. For old hatred is soon renewed, and malice will not be satisfied without working euill.

Of the Fox, the Wolfe and the Lyon.

**H**E that hath bene endamaged by another, ought not to take vengeance by the tongue, in giuing iniurious words, because such vengeance is dishonest, as this present fable following sheweth. Sometime



time there was a fore that ate fish in a river. It happened that the wolfe came that way, and when he saw the fore which ate with so great appetite, he began to say, my brother giue me some fish. And the fore answered him, Alas my Lord, it becometh not that ye eate the reliefe of my table, but for the worship of your person I shall counsell you well. Doe so much as get you a basket, and I shall teach you how ye shall take fish, to the end that ye may alwaies take some when ye be hungry. And the Wolfe went into the street, and stole a basket, and brought it with him, and the fore took the basket, and bound it with a cord at the wolfs taile, and when it was well bound, the fore said to the wolfe, goe you into the river, & I shall take heed to the basket. And the wolfe did as the fore bade him, and as the wolfe was going within the water, the fore by his malice filled the Basket full of stones, and when the basket was full, the fore said to the wolfe: Certainly my Lord, I may no more lift, he hold the basket so full: for it is full of fish: and the Wolfe wening that the fore had said truth, said, I render thanks to the gods, that I once may see and learne the excellent art of fishing. And then the fore said to him. My Lord, abide you heere, and I shall fetch some to helpe vs for to take the fish out of the basket. And in saying these wordes, the fore ranne into the streete, where he found diuers men, to whom he saide in this manner: What doe you here: why stand ye idle? See yonder is the Wolfe which ate your sheepe, your Lambes and your beasts, and now he taketh your fish out of the river, and eateth it. And then all the men came together, some with

stings,

stings, and some with bowes, and other with staves to the river, where they found the wolfe, whom they beat outragiously. And when the poore wolfe saw himselfe thus oppressed and beaten with strokes, he began with all his strength and might to draw, and supposed to haue carryed away the fish, but so strongly he drew, that he pulled his taile from his arse, and very hardly scaped with his life. In the meane time it happened that the Lyon which was king ouer all beasts, was soze sicke, and the wolfe thinking to be quit with the fore, went for to see him as his Lord: And when he came there, he saluted the Lyon, saying vnto him thus: My King I salute you, pleaseth it you to know that I haue gone round about the country and Prouince, and in all places of it, for to seeke medicines profitable for you, for to recouer your health, but nothing haue I found good for your sicknesse, but onely the skinne of Reynard the fore, fierce, proude and malicious, which is to your body medicinall, but he disoaineth to come hither and see you, but ye may call him to counsell, and when he is come, let his skinne be taken from him, and then let him run whither he will; and that faire skin which is so wholesome, wee shall cause it to be bound vpon your body, and within few dayes after, it shall make you in as good health as euer you were. And when he had said these wordes, hee departed from the Lyon and tooke his leaue: but euer hee supposed that the fore had heard him, and so hee did, for hee was within a tawar nigh vnto the place, where he heard all the proposition of the Wolfe, to the which he did provide a remedy, and great preservation: For as soone

as



as the Wolfe was departed from the Lyon, the Fox went into the fields, and in the high way he found a great dunghill, within the which he put himselfe. And when he supposed himselfe to be defiled and dagled enough, he came thus arrayed vnto the lodge of the Lyon, whom he saluted as his soueraigne Lord, saying to him in this manner: Sir King, God giue you good health, and the Lyon answered, God save thee my sweet friend, come neere and kisse mee, and after I shall tell thee some secret, which I woulde not that every one should know. To whom the fox said in this manner, ah Sir King be not displeased, for I am foule arrayed and all to dagled, by reason of the great way which I haue gone, seeking all about for some good medicine to helpe you, wherefore it behooveth me not to be so neere your person, for the stinke of the dung would griene your person, and molest the great sicknesse which you haue: but deare Sir, if it please you, ere ever I come neere to your royall maiesty, I shall bathe and make me cleane, and then I shall come againe, and present my selfe before thy noble person: notwithstanding all this, let it please thee to wit and know, that I come from all the countries hereabout, and from all the realmes adioynning to this prouince, for to see if I could finde some good medicine needfull for thy sicknesse, and to recover thy health: but certainly I can finde no better counsell, then the counsell of an ancient Greeke with a great long beard, a man of great wisdom and experience, who told me that in this prouince is a wolfe without a taile, the which hath lost his taile by vertue of the medicine that is in him, for the which thing it is very  
need-

needfull and expedient, that ye make this Wolfe to come before you, that by him you may recover your former health: and when he is come, dissemble and call him to counsell, and say that it shall be much for his worship and profit; and as he shall be neere vnto you, cast vpon him your armed feete, and as swiftly as ye may, pull the skinne from the body of him, and keepe it whole, saue onely ye shall leaue the head and feete, and then let him goe his way to seeke his fortune: and forthwith, when ye haue the skinne hotte and warme, ye shall bind it about your body, and ere long time be passed, your health shall be restored to you againe, and you shall be whole as you were before. And then the Fox took his leaue of the King, and departed thence againe vnto his carrier. Soone after came the wolfe to see the Lyon, and incontinent the Lyon called the wolfe to counsell, and fastened softly his foote on him, and dispoiled the Wolfe of all his skinne, saue onely his head and feet, and after the Lyon bound it all warme about his belly, and the wolfe ran away skinnles, wherefore he had not enough to defend him from the flies, which vexed him very sore, and for the great distresse that he felt because of the flies that ate his flesh, hee was woe, and ran vnder a hill vpon the which the Fox was. And when the Fox saw him, hee began to laugh and mocke at the Wolfe, saying aloud, Who art thou that passest there with such a faire hood on thy head? and with right faire gloues on thy hands, and shoes on thy feet? Stay, stay a while and harken what I shall say to thee. When thou wentest and camest before the Kings house, thou wert blessed of the Lord.  
and

and when thou wast at the Court, thou hadst many good words, and good talking of all the world. And therefore my gossip, be it evil or good, thou must let all passe, and haue patience in thine aduersitie. This fable sheweth vnto vs, that if any be hurt, or endamaged by some other, he must not auenge himselfe by his tongue, for to make any treason, ne for to say of them any harme or blasphemy, for we ought to consider, that whosoener maketh the pit ready for his brother, oft it hapneth, that he himselfe falleth in the same, and is beaten with the same rod he made for another.

Of the Wolfe which let a fart.

**I**t is folly to thinke more then a man ought to doe, for whatsoever a foole thinketh, it seemeth to him that it shall be so: As it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe, which sometime rose early in the morning, and after he was risen from his couch, he retched himselfe and let a great fart, and began to say to himselfe, Thanked be the gods for these good tidings, this day I shall be fortunate and happy, as mine arse singeth to me. And then he departed from his lodging, and began to walke abroad. And as he went on his way, he found a sackfull of Tallow which a woman had let fall, and with his foote he turned it vpside downe, saying to himselfe, I shall not eat thereof, for thou shouldest hurt my tender stomack, I shall fare this day more delicious, and farre better I know it well, for mine arse did sing so to me. And with these words he went his way, and anon after he found a great piece of Bacon well salted, which he turned vpside downe, and when he had turned and tossed

it

it enough, he said, I disdaine to eate of this meate, because it would make me drinke too much, for it is salt: and as mine arse sang to me lately, I shall eate this day better and more delicious meate: and then he began to walke further, as he entred into a faire meddow, he sawe a Mare and her foale with her, and said to himselfe, I render thanks vnto the gods, for the goodnesse that they send me, for well I wist, and was certaine, that this day I should find some precious meate. When he came neere the Mare and said to her, Certainly sister I must eate thy child. And the Mare said, Doe my brother what shall please thee, but first I pray thee doe me one pleasure, I haue often heard say, that thou art a good Surgeon, therefore I desire thee that thou wilt helpe my foot, for as I passed yesterday through the Forrest, a thorn entred into my foot behind, which grieveth me very sore. I pray thee therefore before thou eate my foale, to pull the same out of my foote. And the Wolfe said, That shall I gladly doe, good Sister, shew me thy foot: and as the Mare shewed the Wolfe her foot, he gave him such a stroke betwixt the eies, that he was stouied, and fell flat to the ground, and by this meanes was her foale saved: and a long time after, was the Wolfe lying vpon the earth for dead, and when he was come againe to himselfe, and that he could speake, he said: I care not for this mishap, for well I wot that yet this day I shall eate and be well filled with delicious meat: & in uttering these words, he lifted vp himselfe, and so departed. And hauing walked a space, he found (by chance) a couple of rams fighting in a meddow, that with their hornes smote

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each

my Lord, you are welcome to *Spasse*, for we be come hither to hold a great solemnitie, and therefore we desire you that you pontifically would sing, and after the Service compleate and finished, do your pleasure with one of vs. The *Wolfe* for vaine-glorie, taining to be a *B;elate*, began to sing and howle aloud before the sheep; and when the men of the towne heard the voice of the wolfe, they came into the stable with great stanes, and so layd vpon the *Wolfe* that he could hardly goe: neuerthelasse, he escaped and went vnder a great tree, vpon which tree stood a man that helued downe the boughes thereof. The wolfe then began to sigh sore, and to make great sorow for his euill hap, and said: *Va Iupiter*. How many ouils haue I had and escaped? But I know it is long of my selfe and by mine owne meanes and proud thoughts; for this day in the morning I found a sack full of *Tallow*, which I disdained, and anon after that a peece of bacon, which I would not eate for feare of great thirst, and because of foolish conceit: so that the euill that happeneth to me, is rightly bestowed. My Father was neuer *Physician*, nor *Leach*, neither haue I euer studied or learned the Science of *Physicke*, therefore if there hapned any euill to me when I would haue drawne the thorne out of the *Spares* foote, it is well imployed. Also my Father was neither patriarche nor bishop, nor euer knew any letter in the booke, and yet I presumed & tooke vpon me to doe sacrifice, and to sing before the gods taining my selfe a *B;elate*; but after my deserting I was well rewarded: also my Father was neuer *Lawyer* nor *Iustice*, and yet I would take vpon me

me to be a great *Iustice*. But I knew neuer neither *A. no B.* and therefore the euill that is come to me is most right. *O Iupiter*, I am worthy of a very great punishment for my offences. Send thou now to me from thy high thronne a sword, or other weapon, wherewith I may strongly punish and beat my selfe by great penance, for well worthy I am to receive a greater punishment. Now the good man being vpon the tree, and hearing all these words of the *Wolfe*, said nothing. And when the *Wolfe* had made an end of his sighings and complaints, the good man tooke his axe wherewith he had cut alway the dead branches of the tree, and cast it vpon the wolfe, and it fell vpon his backe in such manner, that the *Wolfe* turned vpside downe with his feete vptward, in such sort that he lay as if he had bene stark dead. And after he was reuiued againe, he looked vp toward heauen, and began thus to cry out, *Va Iupiter*, I now see well that thou hast heard my prayer. And by earnestly looking vp, he espied the man which sat in the tree, and thinking him to be *Iupiter*, he presently fled toward the Forrest as fast as he could, being very sore hurt and wounded: & ever after he became more meke and humble, then before he was fierce & proud. By this fable men may see, that many things fall out which a foole thinketh not on. And it sheweth to vs, that when any little good hap falleth vnto vs, we ought not to refuse it in hope of better fortunc: it likewise sheweth, that none are to take vpon them to do that which they haue no skill to doe.

## Of the enuious Dogge.

**N**o man ought to haue enuy at other mens good fortune, as appeareth by this fable of an enuious dogge which went into a stable of Dren, because that they shoulde not enter in for to eate of the hay. And then the Dren said vnto him, Thou art euill and peruerse to haue enuy of other mens good, the which is to vs needfull & profitable, for thy kind is not to eate hay. And thus he did of a great bone which he held in his mouth. he would not leaue it, because of the enuy of another dogge being heard by. This fable therfore teacheth vs, that it behooueth every one to keepe himselfe from the company of an enuious person.

## Of the Wolfe and the hungry Dogge.

**T**here be some that thinke to winne, which often happen to leese, for it is commonly said, that as much spredeth the niggard as the liberall, as it appeareth by this fable, of a man which had a great flocke of sheepe, and also he had a dogge for to keepe them from the Wolfes. To this dogge he gaue no meate for the great auarice that he had, and therfore the Wolfe on a day came to the Dogge, and demanded of him the reason why he was so leane, and said vnto him, I see well that thou art ready to starue through hunger, by reason & thy master giveth thee no meate by his scarcitey, but if thou wilt beleue mee, I shall giue thee good counsell. And the Dogge said to him, Certainly I lacke greatly good counsell. When the Wolfe said to him, This shalt thou doe, Let me take a Lambe, and when I shall haue it, I shall runne away,

away, and when thou seest mee, make semblance to run after me, and saine thy selfe that thou canst not overtake me for lacke and fault of meate, which maketh thee so feeble. And thus when the Shepheard shall see that thou maiest not run because of thy great feeblenesse, and debilitie of body, he shall tell thy Lord that thou maiest not recover the lambe because thou art so leane & hungry, and by this meane thou shalt haue thy belly full of meate. The dogge then accorded with the Wolfe, and each of them did as aboue said. And when the Shepheard saw the dogge fall, he supposed well that hunger was the cause of it, for the which cause when he came home he told his master. & when he vnderstood it, he said as a man wroth for shame, I will that from henceforth you giue him bread enough, and then every day the same dogge had soppes of bread and dry bread enough, whereby he got strength and vigour againe. It hapned within a while after, that the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge, and said to him, I perceiue well that I gaue thee good counsell. And the dogge said to the Wolfe, My brother thou saiest truth, wherfore I thanke thee much, for of it I had great neede. And then the Wolfe said to him, If thou wilt, I shall giue thee yet better counsell. And the Dogge answered him, With a brer good will I shall heare it, and if it be good I shall doe after it. When said the Wolfe to him, Giue mee leane to take another Lambe, and doe thou runne after me for to haue it from me, and to bite me, and I shall violently overthrow thee with thy teete backward, as he that hath no puissance and strength, and yet notwithstanding all this, I will not hurt thee:

which cause he was slaine.

Of the Father and his three children.

**H**E is not wise which for to haue vanitie and his pleasure, maketh debate and strife: As it appeares by this fable. There was a man which had thre children, and at the houre of death he bequeathed and gaue them his heritage, that is to wit, a Beare tree, a Goate, and a Pill. And when the father was dead, the brethren assembled themselves together, and went before the Iudge, for to part the liuelihood, and said to the Iudge, My Lord, Our father is dead and hath bequeathed to vs thre Brethren all his heritage, and one should haue as much of it as the other. And then the Iudge demanded what was their liuelihood: And they answered? A Beare tree, a Goate, and a Pill. And then the Iudge said to them, What he that should sit and deuise equal your parts, for the one to haue as much of it as another, should haue a very hard matter to doe, but by your owne aduice how would you haue it? And then the eldest of the thre brethren spake and said, I shall take from the Beare tree all that is crooked and right, And the second said, I shall take from the Beare tree all that is greene and dry. And the third said, I shall haue all the roote, the pill or mass, and all the branches of the Beare tree. And the Iudge said to them, He that then shall haue the most part of it, let him be Iudge, for neither I nor any else can vnderstand or know who shall thereby haue the most or least part of it, and therefore he that can prooue openly, that he hath the most part, shall be Lord of the whole tree. When the Iudge demanded of them, how their fa-

ther

ther had demised to them the Goate? and they said to him, He that shall make fairest prayer and request must haue the Goate. And then the first brother made his request and said, would God that the Goate were now so great, that he might drinke all the water which is vnder the cope of heauen, and when he had drinke it, he should be yet more thirstie. The second said, I suppose that the Goate shall be mine, for a fairer demand and request then thine is I shall now make: I would that all the Hempe and Flaxe, and all the wooll in the world were made into one thred alone, and that the goate were so great, that with the same thred men might not binde one of his legges. Then said the third, The Goate shall surely bee mine, for I would that he were so great, that if an Eagle were at the vppermost part of heauen, he might occupie and haue there as much place, as the Eagle might looke on in height, length and breadth. And then the Iudge said, Which of you thre haue made the fairest prayer. Certainly neither I nor any other can giue the iudgement, and therefore the Goate shall bee to him that of it shall say the truth. And the Pill, how was it aduised by your Father to be parted among you thre? They answered the Iudge, He that shall be the most lyar, most euill, and most slow, ought to haue it. Then said the eldest sonne: I am most slow, full, for many yeeres past I haue dwelled in a great house, and lay vnder the conduits of the same, where fell vpon me all the sonle waters: as pisse, dish-water, and other filth, that most wonderfull stanke, insomuch that all my flesh was rotten thereof, and mine eyes blind, and the hurt vnder my bucke was a soote

a foot high, and yet by stoth I had rather abide there then to rise up. The second said, Suppose that the Spill shall be mine, for if I came to a table covered with all manner of delicate meates whereof I might eate if I would take of the best, I am so stothfull that I may not eate, without one should put the meate in my mouth. The third said, The Spill shall be mine, for I am yet a greater lyar, and more stothfull then any of you both, for if I had thrust unto the death, and if I found then my selfe within a faire water vp to the necke, I would rather die then mooue my selfe to drinke one drop thereof. Then said the Judge, Ye wot not what ye say, for neither I, nor any other may well understand you, but the cause I remit among you. And thus they went without any sentence, for to a foolish demand, belongeth a foolish answer; and therefore they be fooles that will pleade in such sort one against another, for to a small matter, belongeth a small plea.

Of the Wolfe and the Foxe.

**N**One may be master, except first he haue bene a disciple. As it appeareth by this fable of a fox which came to a wolfe, and said to him, My Lord, I pray ye that ye will be my godfather. And the wolfe answered, I am content. And the fox tooke him his sonne praying him that he should learne his sonne good doctrine, the which the wolfe tooke, and went with him vpon a mountaine, and said to the little Foxe, when the beastes come to the field, call me. And the Foxe went and saw from the top of a high hill how all the beastes were comming to the field, wherefore he called his Godfather and said, My Godfather, the beastes

beastes come into the field. And the Wolfe demanded of him what beastes they were. The Foxe answered, There be both kine and swine together. Well said the Wolfe, I care not for them, let them goe, for the Dogs be with them. Soons after, the Foxe looked on the other side, and perceined a Mare which went to the fields, and he went to his Godfather and said, Godfather, a Mare is gone to the fields. And the Wolfe demanded of him, whereabout is shee? and the Foxe answered, She is by the Forrest: and the Wolfe said, now go we to dinner: and the Wolfe with his godson went into the Forrest, and came to the Mare and perceined a young Colt by her. When the Wolfe tooke the Colt by the necke, and drabe him into the wood, and deuoured him betwene them both: and when they had well eaten, the godsonne said to the godfather, My Godfather, I commend you to God, and much I thanke you for your good doctrine, for ye haue taught me well, insomuch that now I am a great clark, and now I will goe to my mother. When the Wolfe said to his godsonne, My godsonne, if thou goest away, thou shalt repent thee, for thou hast not yet still studied, neither knowest thou yet thy syllogismes. Vpon my good godfather, said the Foxe, I know well all. When the Wolfe said to him, With thou wilt needs goe, to God I commend thee. And when the fox was come to his mother, she said to him, surely thou hast not studied enough, and then he said to his mother, I am so great a Clarke, that I can cast the diuell from the clift. Come let vs goe chase, and ye shall see whether I can doe ought or nought. And the young Fox would haue done as his godfather the Wolfe



wolfe did, & said to his mother, Make a good watch, and when the beasts shall come to the field; let mee haue knowledge thereof. And his mother said, well so shall I doe. She made good watch, and when she saw the Kine and the Swine goe to the fields, she said vnto him, My sonne, the Kine and Swine goe together into the fields: and he answered: My mother, for them I care not, let them goe, for the Dogs keepe them well: and within a short while after, the mother saw the Mare come next vnto the wood, and said vnto her sonne, My sonne, the Mare is come vnto the wood: and he answered, My mother, there be good tidings, abide ye here, for I goe to fetch our dinner: and he entred into the wood, and after would doe as his godfather had done before, and went and tooke the Mare by the necke, but the Mare took him with her teeth and bare him to the Shepheard, and the mother cryed from the toppe of the hill, My sonne let goe the mare and come hither againe, but he might not, for the Mare hold him fast with her teeth: and as the Shepheard came so to kill him, the mother cryed, and said weeping: Alas my sonne, thou didst not learne well, and hast bene too little a while at Schoole, wherefore for thy foolish presumption, thou must now dye miserably: and the Shepheard tooke and slew him. Which fable sheweth, that none ought to make himselfe learned, except he haue first well studied, for some thinke themselves to be great Clarkes, that can doe nothing clarkly.

Of

Of a man, the old Lion, and  
his sonne.

**H**E that refuseth the good doctrine of his Father, if euill happe come vnto him, it is both right and reason, as this fable rehearseth vnto vs: Of a Labourer which sometime liued in a Desert by his cultivating labour. In this Desert also liued a Lion that wasted and destroyed all the Seede that every day the said labourer had sowed: and also this Lion destroyed and spoiled his trees. And because he did to him so great harme, he made a hedge, to the which he set cozbe and nettes to take the Lion. And on a certaine time, the Lion came to eate cozne, and entred within a nette, and was taken; and then the labourer came thither, and beat him so wonderfully, that scarcely he could escape away with life. And because that the Lion saw that he might not escape the subtilty of the man, he tooke his young Lion and went and dwelt in another Region. And within a while after, when the young Lion was growne, and was fierce, and strong. he demanded of his Father, and said, My Father, be we of this Region? Nay, sayd the Father, for we be fled away from our Land. And the young Lion demaunded of him wherfore? and the Father answered him, for the great subtilty and crafty devices of the Man. And the young Lion demanded of him, what man it was? And his Father answered and sayd vnto him, he is nothing so great, nor so strong as we be, but he is farre more subtille & ingenious than we be, making snares to take vs. And



And the sonne answered to the Father, I shall geaunge me on him. And the great Lion said to him, Goe not, for if thou goest thither, thou shalt repent thee thereof, and shalt bee like a Fole. And the sonne answered the Father, By mine head I shall goe thither, and see what he can doe. And as he went to find the man, he met an Oxe within a meadow, and on whose whole backe was al laine and soze, to whom he said in this manner, Who is he that hath led you hither, and that hath hurt you? And they said to him, It is the man. And he said to them, Certainly this is a marvellous thing. I pray you that ye will let me see him. When they departed and shewed him the Labourer as he eared the earth, and the Lyon without uttering any words passed toward the man, to whom he spake in this maner: Ya man, thou hast done ouer many evils both to me and to my father, and likewise to our beasts: Wherefore I tell thee, that to me thou must doeright. And the man said, I aduise thee to take heed, for and if thou comest too neare me. I shall kill thee with this great club, and after with this knife I shall flea thee. And the Lion said, Come before my Father, and he as king shall do to vs good iustice. And the man said, I am content, if thou wilt sweare to me, that thou wilt not touch me, untill we be in presence of thy Father, and also I shall sweare unto thee, that I shall goe with thee into the presence of thy father. Thus the Lyon and the man beganne to goe together by the way where his cords and nets had bene set: and as they passed by, the Lyon fell into a cove, and by the fate he was taken, so that he could go no further: then he

said

said to the man, O I pray thee that thou wilt helpe me, for I may not goe. And the man answered to him, I may not, for I haue sworn unto thee that I will not touch thee untill we come before thy father. And as the Lyon supposed to haue vnbound himselfe for to scape, he fell into another snare. And then he began to cry after the man, saying, O good man, I pray thee vnbind me. But the man began to strike him vpon the head: and when the Lyon saw that he might not escape, he said to the man, I pray thee that thou smite me no more vpon the head, but vpon the eares, because I would not heare the counsell of my father. And the man began to smite him at the heart and slew him. Wherefore we see, that vnto disobedient children, many times misfortune befalleth.

Of the Knight and his seruant which  
found the Foxe.

Many there be that for their great leasing suppose to put vnder all the world, but euer at the last their leasings be knowne, as appeareth by this fable, of a knight which went with an Archer of his through the land, and as they rode they found a Fox, and the knight said to the Archer, In good sooth I see a great Fox. And the Archer said, My Lord, maruell you thereat: I haue bene in the region whereas the Foxes be as great as Oren. And the knight said, In good sooth their skins were good to make mantles with if skinners might haue them. And as they were riding they fell into many words and deuices, and because the knight perceiued well the leasing of the Archer, hee began to make prayers

to

to

to the gods so; to make his Archer afraid, and said in this manner, O Iupiter thou great god, I pray thee that this day thou wilt keepe vs from leasing, so that we may passe safe this great river which is here before vs, and that we may safely come to our house. And when the archer heard the prayer of his Lord, he was greatly abashed, and demanded of his Lord, wherefore he prayed so devoutly. And the Knight answered, Wottest thou not well that thou must soone passe a great river, & that he who all this day shall haue made one leasing, if he enter in, he shall neuer come out againe? Of which words the archer was very dreadfull. And when they had ridden a little way, they found a little river, Wherefore the archer demanded of his Lord, Is this the flood which we must passe? No said the Knight, it is greater. O my Lord, I say so, because that the fore which you saw, might well haue swimmied ouer this little water. And the Lord said, I care not therefore. And after they had ridden a little further, they found another little river, and the archer demanded of him, Is this the flood that ye spake of? Nay said he, for it is greater & broader. And the archer said againe to him: O my Lord, I say so, because the fore of the which I spake to day, was no greater then a Calfe: and then the Knight hearing the dissimulation of the archer, answered not: and so they rode forth along, til they found yet another river. And then the archer demanded of his Lord is that the same? Nay said the knight, but soone we shall come thereto. O my Lord, quoth he, I aske, because that the fore whereof I spake to you this day, was no greater then a sheepe: and when they

they had ridden till euening, they found a Riuer of great breadth, and when the Archer saw it, he began to shake for feare, and demanded of his Lord, O my Lord, is this the Riuer? Yea said the Knight, O my Lord, said he, I assure you on my faith, that the fore of the which I spake to day, was no greater then the fore which we saw to day, wherefore I confesse to you my sinne. And then the Knight beganne to smile, and said to his archer in this manner: this river also is no worse then the rivers which we saw before and haue passed through. When the archer was ashamed, because he might no more couer his leasing. Wherefore it is good euer to say the truth, and to practise honest dealing both in word and deed, for the false speeches of a lyar procure his owne shame and contempt among men.

## Of the Eagle and the Raven.

**N**One ought to take vpon him for to doe a thing which is perilous, except to know himselfe to be able to doe it, as appeareth by this fable. An Eagle by flying tooke a Lambe, whereof the Raven had great enuy, and said to himselfe, Wherefore should not I take a Lambe as well as the Eagle? And shortly after, as the Raven saw a great flocke of sheepe passe along by him, he descended very proudly and outrageously on them, and in such manner smot a weather that the clawes abode in the flesh, by reason whereof he could not flye away. When the Shepheard came and brake his wings, and tooke him, and after bare him to his children to play withall, and they demanded of him what bird he was. And the Raven answered to them, I supposed to haue bene an Eagle,

and

and by my ouer-wéning. I thought to haue taken a Lambe as the Eagle did. But now I know well that I am a Raven. Therefore the fable ought not to compare with the strong, for sometime when he supposeth to doe more then he may, he falleth thereby into great dishonour, as appeareth by this present fable of the Raven, which supposed himselfe to be as strong as the Eagle.

Of the Eagle and the Weasill.

**N**O man what might soener he hath, ought to dispraise another, as appeareth by this present fable, of an Eagle which chased sometime after an Hare, and because that the Hare might not resist against the Eagle, he demanded ayd and helpe of the Weasill, which tooke her into her keeping: and because the Eagle saw the Weasill so little, he dispraised her, and by force tooke away the Hare, whereat the Weasill was wroth, and went and beheld the nest of the Eagle which was upon an high treé, and seeing it, cligined vp into the treé and cast downe the yong Eagles, whereof they dyed. And for this cause the Eagle was angry, and went with Iupiter, praying him that he would find him a sure place where he might lay his egges and his little chickens, and Iupiter did grant it, and withall gaue him such a gift, that when the time of childing should come, he should make her yong ones within his bosome. When the Weasill knew this, she gathered together a great quantity of ordure or filth; and thereof made a high hill, so for let her selfe fall from the top of it into the bosome of Iupiter, and when Iupiter felt the sinke, he beganne to shake his bosome, and both the Weasill and the

the egges of the Eagle fell downe to the ground, and thus were all the egges broken and lost: And when the Eagle knew it, he made a vow that he would neuer make any Eagle, untill he were thereof assured. And therefore none, how mighty and strong soener he be, ought to dispraise another, for there is none so simple, but that he may auenge himselfe either one way or other.

Of the Foxe and the Goate.

**H**E which is wise, ought to consider the end before he begin any worke, as appeareth by this fable of a Fox and a Goate which sometime descended into a deepe Well for to drinke, & when they had drunke, because they could not come up againe, the Fox said to the Goate, My friend, if thou wilt helpe me, we shall be soone both out of this Well: for if thou wilt set thy two feete against the wall, I shall well leape vpon thee, and then I shall leape out of the well: and when I shall be out of it, thou shalt take me by the hand, and I shall draw thee out of the well. And vnto this thing the Goate accorded, and said I will. And then the Goate lift vp his feete against the wall, and the fox did so much as by his subtilty that he got out of the well, and when hee was out, he began to looke downe vpon the Goate which was within the well. And the Goate said vnto him, Helpe me now as thou hast promised. But the Foxe beganne to laugh at him, saying: O master Goate, if thou hadst bene wise, according to the gravity of thy faire beard, thou wouldest ere euer thou haddest entred into this well, haue taken heed how thou shouldest come forth of it againe. Therefore he that

will wisely governe himfelfe, ought ever to take hede to the end of the worke.

Of the Cat and the Chickin.

**H**E that is false by nature, and hath begunne to deceive others, will use his craft still, as it appeareth by this present fable. A Cat there was that sometime tooke a Chickin, the which he began very greatly to blame, onely that he might picke a quarrell and eate him, saying unto him after this maner: Come hither, little Chickin, thou doest no good but cry all the night, and keepst me thereby from sleeping. And the Chickin answered, I doe it for thy great profit. Then the Cat said to him, Yet which is worse, thou art an incestuous leacher, for thou knowest naturally both the mother and the daughter: and the Chicken said, I doe it that my master may have egges for his eating, and my master for his profit, gave to me both mother and daughter for to multiply the egges. Then the Cat said to him, By my faith gossip thou hast excuses enough, but nevertheless thou shalt passe through my throte, for I purpose not to fast this day for all thy words. Thus it is of him which is accustomed to live by ravine, for he cannot abstaine from it, for all the excuses that may be made.

Of the Fox and the Bush.

**M**en ought not to aske helpe of them that be more accustomed to doe euill then good, as it appeareth by this fable. There was a Foxe which for to escape the perill to be taken, trod upon a thorne which did hurt him sore, wherefore wringing he said to the bush, I am come to thee as my refuge,

refuge, and thou hast hurt mee: And the bush said to him, Thou hast erred and beguiled thy selfe, for thou supposedst to haue taken me as thou doest hens and chickens. And therefore men ought not to helpe them which be accustomed to doe euill, but ought rather to hinder them.

Of the Man and his Idoll.

**O**f the euill man sometime commeth profit to some other, though it be contrary to his will, as appeareth by this fable: of a man which had in his house an Idoll, which he oftentimes adored as his God, and the more he prayed to him, the more he failed and became poore, wherefore the man was angry at his Idoll, and tooke it by the legs, and smote the head of it so strongly against the wal, that it brake all to pieces, out of which Idoll issued a great treasure, whereof the man was glad and ioyfull. And the man said to the Idoll, Now know I well that thou art wicked, euill and peruerse, for when I worshipped thee thou didst nought for me. Wherefore when euill men doe good, it is against their will.

Of a Fisher.

**O**nce a Fisher piped for to make the fish dance: and when he saw that for no song he could pipe they would dance, he waxed angry, and cast his nets into the water, and tooke great store of fish, and when he had drawn his nets to land, the fish began to leape and dance, and then he said unto them: Certainly it appeareth now well that ye be very euill beasts, for now when ye be taken, ye leape and dance, and before when I piped on my Bagpipe, I could not get you to dance. Wherefore it appeareth well

that those things which be done in season, be well done, and by good advice.

Of the Cat and the Rat.

**T**he man that is wise and hath once bene beguiled, will no more trust him that hath beguiled him, as rehearseth this fable, of a Cat that went into a house where many rats were, which he did eat one after another. And when the Rats perceived the fierceness and cruelty of the Cat, they held a counsell together, wheras they determined with one consent that they should no more come upon the lower ground. Wherefore one of them most ancient, said to all the other, My brethren, yee know against whom we may not resist, therefore we must needs hold our selves upon the upper balkes, to the end our enemy may not take us: of the which words the other Rats were well content, and agreed to his counsell. And when the Cat knew the counsell of the Rats, he hung himselfe by his two feet behind, upon a pin of yron which did stick in a balke, faining himselfe to be dead. Then one of the Rats looking downward, and seeing the Cat so hanging, began to laugh, and said to the Cat, O my friend, if I knew that thou wert dead, I would come downe, but I know thee to be false, and dost but hang so counterfeiting thy selfe to be dead, therefore I will not goe downe. By which we learne, not to trust him the second time, which hath deceived us once.

Of the labourer and the Pielarge.

**H**e which is taken with the wicked and evil, is thought to suffer like paine and punishment. As it appeareth by this fable: Of a Labourer which some-

sometime dressed and set gins for to take the Geese, and also the Cranes which did eat his Corne. It hapned that once in a morning he tooke a great many of Geese & Cranes, and a Pielarge among them, which earnestly prayed the Labourer to let him goe, saying that he came not thither to doe any harme. At these words the Labourer began to laugh, and said to the Pielarge, If thou hadst not bene in their fellowship, thou hadst not entred into my nette, nor bene taken, but because thou art found and taken with them, thou shalt be punished as they be. Wherefore none ought to keepe company with such as doe evil, unlesse he be willing to be punished as they be for their bad conditions.

Of the child which kept the sheepe.

**T**he man which is accustomed to make leasings, shall not bee beleueed when he telleth the truth, as rehearseth this present fable, of a child which sometime kept sheepe, the which cryed oft without cause, saying, Alas for Gods loue succour mee, for the Wolfe will eat my sheepe. And when the Labourers that cultered & eared the earth thereabouts heard his cry, they came to him, and did so very often and found nothing, and as they saw that there was no Wolves, they returned againe to their owne labour. Notwithstanding, it hapned on a day that the Wolfe came indeed, and the childe cryed as hee was accustomed to doe, and because that the labourers had bene oftentimes deceived, they kept their woork still, and supposed that it was not truth, by reason whereof the Wolfe ranne away with one of the sheepe. Thus we see, that men will not lightly beleuee

beleene him that is knowne for a liar.

Of the Ant and the Columbe.

**N**One ought to be ingratefull for the benefites which he receiveth of another, as rehearseth this fable, of an Ant which came to a fountaine to drinke, and as she would haue drunke, she fell into the fountaine, wherein she thought to haue bene drowned without helpe, and the Columbe tooke a branch of a tree, and cast it to saue her selfe, and then the Ant went anon vpon the branch and saued her selfe. When came the falconer which would haue taken the said Columbe, and the Ant seeing the Falconer preparing his Nets, came to his foote, and so fast pricked him, that hee caused him to smite the earth with his foote, and therewith made so great a noise that the Columbe heard it, and withall flew away before the gins and nets were set. Wherefore none ought to forget the benefit which he hath receiued of some other: for ingratitude is a great sin.

Of the Bee and Iupiter.

**T**he euill that a man sheweth to another, cometh to himselfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Bee which offered vnto Iupiter a piece of Honey, whereof Iupiter was much ioyfull, and said to the Bee, Demand of me what thou wilt, and I shall giue it thee. When the Bee prayed him in this manner, O Iupiter, I pray thee that thou wilt grant mee that whatsoever shall come for to take away my Honey, if I King him, he may suddenly die. And because that Iupiter loued the humane linage, he said to the Bee, Let it suffice thee, that whosoener shall take thy honey, if thou King or prick him, incontinent thou shalt dye:

dye: and thus her request was turned to her owne harme. Wherefore men ought not to demand of God any thing that is vnbonest or vniust.

Of the Carpenter and of Mercury.

**B**ow much God is more mercifull and benigne to the good and holy, so much the more he punisheth the wicked and euill, as we may see by this fable, of a Carpenter which cut wood by a riuer for to make a Temple to the gods. And as he cut wood, his Axe fell into the water, wherefore he beganne to wepe, and to call to the gods for helpe: and the god Mercury for pity appeared to him, and asked him wherefore he wept, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and asked of him if that were the Axe which he had lost. And he said nay: then the god shewed him another Axe of silver, and he semblably said: and because Mercury saw that he was good and true, he drew his Axe out of the water, and gaue it him, and much good bestee hee gaue him. And the Carpenter told this story to his fellows, of the which one of them came to the same place to cut as his fellow did before, and let fall his Axe into the water and began to wepe, and to demand helpe and ayde of the gods. Whereupon Mercury appeared before him, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and demanded of him saying, Is this same it that thou hast lost? And he answered to Mercury and said, Yea saye Sir and mighty god, that same is it: and Mercury seeing the malice of the villaine, gaue to him neither the one nor the other, but left him weeping for his owne Axe. Thus god which is good and iust, rewardeth all good men in this world, euery one after his



Here beginne the Fables of Aelian,  
right pleasant to reade.

The first Fable is of the old Woman  
[and the Wolfe.



Every kind of spirit is not to be believed by us, as appeareth by this fable, of an old woman, which saith unto her child because it wept: Certainly if thou weepest any more, I shall make the Wolfe to eat thee. The Wolfe hearing this old woman say so, abode still at the gate, and supposed to haue the child to eat, and when the Wolfe had tarried there so long that hee was hungry, he returned againe to the wood, and the Wolfe demanded of him, Why hast thou brought me no meate? and he answered, The old woman hath beguiled me, which promised me her child to eat, and at the last I had it not. Therefore men ought not to put any great confidence in a womans speeches.

The second Fable is of the Tortesse  
and of the other Bird.

He that exalteth himselfe more then he ought to doe, seldome cometh to good, as appeareth by this fable, of a Tortesse which said to the birds, If ye lift me vp very high from the ground into the aire, I shall shew to you great plenty of precious stones. When the Eagle tooke her, and bare her so high that she might not see the earth, and said to her, Shew me  
now

now the precious stones that thou promisedst to shew me: and because the Tortesse might not see the earth, and that the Eagle knew well that he was deceived, he thrust his claws into the Tortesse belly, and killed him. By which fable we learne, that he which will haue worship and glozy, may not get it without great labour: therefore it is better and more sure for a man to keepe himselfe lowly, then to exalt himselfe on high, and after to die shamefully: for it is a common saying, Whoso mounteth higher then he should, falleth suddenly lower then he would.

The third Fable is of the two Crewisses.

The man which will undertake to teach other, ought first to examine & correct himselfe, as it appeareth by this fable of a Crewisse, which would haue chastised her owne daughter, because that she went not right, and said to her, My daughter, it pleaseth me not that yee goe thus backward, for thereby thou maist come to some harme. And the daughter said to her, My mother, I shall goe right and so ward with a good will, if ye will goe before to shew me the way. But the mother could goe none otherwise but after her kind, wherfore the daughter said to her, My mother, learne first your selfe for to goe right and so ward, and then ye may teach me. Wherfore he that will teach other, ought first to shew good example himselfe, for great shame it is for a Doctor to haue his owne faults accuse him.

The fourth Fable is of the Asse  
and the Lyons skin.

None ought to glozy in the goods of other, as rehearseth this fable of an Asse, which some  
time

time found the skinnz of a Lyon, which he did weare on him, but he could neuer hide his eares therewith. And when he was (as he supposed) well arayed with the said skinn, he ran into the forrest, and when the wilde beasts saw him come, they were fearefull and began to flee, so they thought it had bene the Lyon. And the master of the Asse sought his Asse vp and downe in euery place, and when he had long sought him, he thought he would goe to the forrest, and as he was in the forrest, he met his Asse arayed as is before said. But his master which had sought him so long, saw his eares, whereby he knew him well, and anon he tooke him, and said in this manner: Ha ha master Asse, are ye clothed with the Lyons skin? thou makest the beasts afraid, but if they knew thee as well as I doe, they would not feare thee, but I assure thee that well I shall beate thee for this. When he tooke from him the skinn of the Lyon and said to him, Lyon thou shalt be no more, but Asse shalt thou euer be, and his master so beat him with a cudgell, that euer after he remembred it. Wherefore he which aduanceth himselfe of other mens goods, is a very foole, for as men say commonly, he is not well arayed, which is clothed with another mans gowne.

The fift Fable is of the Frogge  
and the Foxe.

It is great folly for any man to attempt to doe that which he cannot doe, as by this fable appeareth. A Frogge sometime came out of a ditch, and presumed to leape vpon a high Mountaine, and when she

she was vpon the high mountaine, she said to the other beasts, I am a Mistress in medicine, and can giue reinedy to all manner of sickness by my art and subtilty, and shall render you good health, whereof some beloeued her. When the Foxe which perceiues the foolish beleefe of the beasts, began to laugh and said to them. Poore beasts, how may this foule and verimous beast which is sick and pale of colour, render and giue to you health? for the Leach that will heale some other, ought first to helpe himselfe; for many counterfeite the Leach, which cannot a word of the Science of medicine, from the which I pray God to keepe.

The 6. Fable is of the Dogge.

He that is vaine glorious of that which should humble him, is a very foole, as by this fable most plainly appeareth. There was a man which had two dogges, of the which one without barking vled to bite the folke, and the other barked, but did not bite. And when the master of the house perceiued the malice of the dogge which barked not, hee hung about his neck a bel, to the end that men should beware of him: Wherefore this Dogge was very proud hereof and began to dispraise all other dogges: for the which one of the most ancient said vnto him, O foolish beast, now perceiue I well thy folly and great madnesse, in thinking that this Bell is giuen thee for thine owne desert and merite, for certainly it is not so, but it is taken to thee for demerite, and because of thy shrewdnes and great treason, for to shew that thou art false, and a traytour. Whereby we learne, that none ought to be ioyfull of that thing,

where-

whereof he ought to be sorrowfull, as many fooles be: for a great foole were that these, which being led to be hanged, with a cord of gold about his necke, if he should make ioy thereof, although the cord were very rich and costly.

The seventh fable, is of the Cammell and of Iupiter.

**E**very creature ought to be content with that that God hath giuen him, without taking the inheritance of others, as appeareth by this fable of a Cammell which sometime complained to Iupiter, of the other beastes that mocked him, because he was not beautifull as they were, wherfore instantly he praised to Iupiter in this manner: Faire sir and mighty god, I pray thee that thou wilt giue me hornes, that I may be no more mocked. Iupiter then begonne to laugh, and in stead of hornes, he tooke from him his eares, saying, Thou hast more good then it becometh thee to haue, and because thou demandest that which thou oughtest not to haue, I haue taken from thee that which thou oughtest to haue: For no man ought to desire more then he ought to haue, lest he thereby lose that which he hath.

Fable viii. of two fellowes.

**M**en ought not to hold fellowship with him which is accustomed to beguile other, as appeareth by this present fable of two fellowes which sometime held fellowship together, to goe both by mountaines & vallies: and for to make better their voyage, they were swozne each to other, that none of them both should leaue other until death should part them. And as they walked in a Forrest, they

they met with a great wild Beare, and they both ran away, for feare of the which, one of them climed vp into a tree; and when the other saw that his fellow was gone and left him, he laied himselfe down on the earth, and sained him to be dead. Incontinent the Beare came for to eate him, but because the gallant plaied well his game, the Beare went forth on his way and toucht him not: and then his fellow came downe from the tree and said vnto him, I pray thee tell me what the Beare said to thee: and his fellow said, He taught me many faire secrets, but among all other things he said to me, That I should neuer trust him which hath once deceived me.

Fable ix. of two Pots.

**T**he poore ought not to take the rich for his fellow, as appeareth by this fable of two Pots, of which one was of copper, & the other of earth, the which did mixe together in a riuer, and because that the earthen pot went swifter then did the copper pot, the copper pot said, I pray thee let vs goe together, and the earthen pot answered, I will not goe with thee, for if thou shouldst chance to hit me, thou wouldst breake me in pieces. Wherefore the poore is afoole that comparoth himselfe with the rich, for better it is to liue in pouerty, then to die villainously and be oppressed of the rich.

Fable x. of the Lyon and the Bull.

**T**he serueth not a man alwaies to reuenge himselfe vpon him that hath done him any iniury:

as appeareth by this present fable, of a Bull which sometime fled before a Lyon, and as the Bull would haue entered into a tauerne for to save him, a Goate came against him to let him that he should not enter, to whom the Bull said: It is not time now to avenge me on thee, for the Lyon chaseth me, but the time shall come that I shall finde thee out. Wherefore that man is not wise, which to be presently revenged on his enemy, will bring himselfe into moze perill and danger.

The 11. Fable is of the Ape and his sonne.

**T**here is no greater folly then for a man to praise himselfe, as rehearseth this present fable, of Iupiter chiefe of the gods, which made all the beasts and birds for to be assembled together for to know their kind. Therewith came forth the Ape, which presented his sonne to Iupiter saying thus: Faire sir, and mighty god, looke and see here the fairest beast that ever thou createdst in this world. Hereat Iupiter began to laugh, saying vnto him: Thou art a foule beast thus for to praise thy selfe. For none ought to praise himselfe, but ought to doe good and vertuous works, for the which other men may giue him praise and commendation.

The 12. Fable is of the Crane and the Peacocke.

**T**hough a man be neuer so excellent in any science, yet it is folly in him to prayse himselfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Peacocke which sometime made a dinner to a Crane, and when they had eaten and drunken enough, they had much talke together: wherefore the Peacocke said to the Crane, Thou

Thou hast not so faire a forme, nor so faire feathers as I haue. To whom the Crane answered & said, It is truth: neuerthelesse, thou hast not one so good and faire a vertue as I haue. For albeit that I haue not so faire feathers as thou hast, yet I can flye better then thou thy selfe canst, for with thy faire feathers thou must ever abide on the earth, but I can flye euen where it pleaseth me. Thus every one ought to be content with that gift which nature hath bestowed on him, without making any vaine boast thereof.

Fable 13. of the Hunter and the Tyger.

**F**arre worse is the stroke of a tongue, then the wound of a speare, as appeareth by this present fable: Of a Hunter which with his arrowes hurt the wild beasts in such wise that none escaped him: to the which beasts a Tygre fierce and hardy said in this manner. Be not afraid so, for I shall keepe you well. And as the Tygre came to the wood, the hunter was hid within a bush, and when he saw the Tygre passe before him, he shot at him an arrow and hit him in the thigh, whereof the Tygre was greatly abashed, and weeping and sore sighing, said to the other Beasts, I wot not from whence this cometh vnto me. And when the Fox saw him so greatly abashed, all laughing he said vnto him, Ha ha Tygre, thou art wonderfull mighty and strong. Then the Tygre said to him, My strength auaileth me not at this time, for none may keep himselfe from treason. And therefore some secret is heere which I knew not before. Yet notwithstanding, this I may well auouch, that there is no worse arrow, nor that

that hurteth a man moze then the arrow that is shot from an euill tongue. For when some person proffereth or saith some word in the fellowship of some honest men of good life, all the fellowship suppoeth that that which this euill tongue hath said; is true, albeit that it be but leasing. But notwithstanding the good man shall euer be wounded of the same arrow, which wound shall be vncurable. And if it were the stroke of a speare, it might bee with a Surgeon healed, because that incontinent as the word is spoken, he that said it, is no moze master of it. And for this cause the stroke of the tongue is most dangerous and vncurable.

## Fable xiiii. of the foure Oxen.

**M**EN ought not to breake their faith with their good friend, nor to leaue his fellowship, as it appeareth by this fable of foure Oxen which were all in a faire graine meadow. And because that they euer kept them together, none other beast durst assault them, and also the Lyon dreathed them much. The which Lyon on a day came to them, and by his deceivable words thought for to beguile them, and to take them the better, made them to be separated each from other: and when they were separated, the Lyon went and tooke one of them, and when the Lyon would haue strangled him. the Ox said vnto him, Gossip, here is a soile that beloneth false and deceivable words, and leaueth the fellowship of his good friend; for if we had bene euer together, thou hadst not taken me: and therefore he which is safe standeth well and sure, ought to looke to himselfe that

he

he fall not through his owne folly.

## Fable xv. of the Bush and the Auber tree.

**N**ONE for his beauty ought to dispaire any other, for sometime such a one as is faire, soone wareth soule, and from high falleth low, as it appeareth by this fable, of a faire tree which mocked and scooned a little bush, and said: Wilt thou not the faire beauty of mee? With me men edifie and build faire houses, palaces, castles, galleies, and diuers other ships for to saile on the sea, thus hee aduanced and praised himselfe. Then came there a Labourer with his axe for to hew and smite him to the ground. And as the Labourer smote vpon the faire tree, the bush said, Certainly my brother, if thou wert as little as I am, men should not hew ne smite thee to the ground. Wherefore none ought to reioyce himselfe of his worthip, for he that is now in great honour and worthip, hereafter may fall into as great shame and dishonour.

## Fable xvi. of the Fisher, and the little Fish.

**M**EN ought not to leane the thing that is sure and certain, in hope of the vncertaine, as to be rehearseth this fable, of a Fisher which with his line tooke a little fish; which said to him, My friend, I pray thee that thou wilt not put me to death, for now I am taught to eate, but when I shall be greater, if thou come hither, of me thou shalt haue moze good, for then I shall serue thee a good while. And the fisher said, With that I now haue thee, thou shalt not so escape from mee, for great folly it were in me to sake thee here another time. For men may

ll 4

not

not to let goe that whereby they be sure, hoping to haue afterward that which is uncertaine.

Fable 17. of Phœbus, the auaricious and the couetous Man.

**N**One ought to damage himself, to the end he may hurt another the more, as it appeareth by this fable of Iupiter which sent Phœbus into the earth, to haue all the knowledge of the thought of men. This Phœbus chanced to meet with two men, of the which one was enuious, and the other right couetous. Phœbus demanded of them what their thought was. We think, said they, to demand of thee great gifts. To the which Phœbus answered, Demand now what ye will, for all that ye shall aske mee, I shall grant it you, and of that which the first shall aske, the second shall haue double, or as much more againe. And then the auaricious said, I will that my fellow aske what he will first: whereof the enuious was well content, and said vnto Phœbus, Faire sir, I pray thee that I may lose one of mine eyes. Wherefore Phœbus began to laugh, and departed againe to Iupiter, and told him the great malice of the enuious, which was ioyfull and glad of the harme and damage of another, and how he was content to suffer paine, for to damage some other.

Fable 18. of the theefe, and the child that wept.

**H**e is a foole that putteth his goods in iopardie to be lost, in hope to get more; as appeareth by this fable, of a theefe which found a child weeping befor a Well, of whom the theefe demanded why he

he wept. And the child answered, I wepe because I haue let fall into this Well a bucket of gold. And then the theefe tooke off his clothes, and laid them on the ground, and went downe into the Well: and when he was downe, the child tooke his clothes and went away, leauing him in the Well. Wherefore none ought to leaue that which he hath, in hope for to get that which he hath not: and those things neuer come to good, which are gotten by bad meanes.

Fable 20. of the Lyon and the Goate.

**T**hat man is wise which can keepe himselfe from the wily and false, as appeareth by this fable: Of a Lyon which met with a Goate which was vpon a Mountaine: and when the Lyon saw her, he said to her in this manner, for to giue her occasion to come downe from the hill, to the end that he might eate her. My sister, why comest thou not hither into this faire Greene meadow, for to eate of these faire hearbes or grasse? And the Goate answered him, Albeit that thou sayest truth, yet neuerthelesse sith thou speakest it not neither for my good nor profit, but onely that thou mightest eate and deuoure me, I meane not to trust thy faire speeches: for many times I haue heard say of my damme, He that is well, let him not seke to amend himselfe: and he which is in a sure place, is a foole if he goe from it, and put himselfe in danger and perill, in hope of better fortune.

Fable



The xxi. Fable, of the Crowe  
which was athirst.

**B**etter is wit then force, as rehearseth this fable, of a Crowe which came to drinke out of a bucket, and because that she might not reach to the water, she filled the Bucket with small stones, insomuch that the water came upwards, whereof she did drinke at pleasure. Whereby we understand, that wisdom is more to be commended then any worldly might, and by Sapience men may resist great evils.

The xxii. Fable, of the villaine, and of the  
yong Bull.

**H**e which is of an euill nature, shall haue great paine to amend his conditions, as appeareth by this fable, of a villaine which had a yong bull, the which he might not bind, because that euer he smote with his hoznes, wherefore the villaine cut off his hoznes. But when he would haue bound him, the Bull cast his feet from him, in such wise that he suffered no man to come nere him. And when the villaine perceiued the malice of the Bull, he said vnto him, I shall chastise thee well enough, for I shall put thee into the Butchers hands: and then the Bull indeed was chastised. Thus ought men to doe with wicked and rebellious people, which giue themselves to all kinde of euill, namely, to put them into the hangmans hands, and to let him be their butcher to rule them, for otherwise their accustomed conditions will more and more spread, to the corrupting of better disposed persons among whom they liue.

The

The xii. Fable, is of the Palmer  
and of the Satyre.

**M**en ought to beware of them which beare both fire and water, as rehearseth this fable. Of a Pilgrime which walked in the winter thorow a great Forrest, and because that the snow had covered all the wayes, he wist not whither he went. Against whom came a woodwose named Satyre, because he saw him cold; which approached to the Pilgrim, and brought him to his pit: and when the Pilgrim saw him, he had great dread, because that a woodwose is a monster like a man. And as this Satyre led this Pilgrime into a pit, the Pilgrim did blow his hands for to heate them, for he was sore a-cold: & the woodwose gaue him hot water to drinke, and when the Pilgrim would haue drunke it, he began to blow it. And the woodwose demaunded of him, why he did blow it. And the Pilgrime said, I blow it to make somewhat more cold. The woodwose then said to him, Why fellowship is not good for me, because that thou bearest both fire and water in thy mouth: Wherefore goe hence from my pitte, and neuer returne againe: for the fellowship of the man which hath two tongues is naught. Wherefore the man that is wise, ought to flie the fellowship of flatterers, for by flattering and adulation, many haue bene deceiued.

The xxiii. Fable is of the Oxe and  
of the Rat.

**L**ords ought to loue their subiects, for he which is hated of his tenants and subiects, is not lord of his

his lands. As it appeareth by this present fable, of an Oren which sometime was within a stable, and as the Oren on a time would faine haue slept, a Katte came & bit him by the thighes, and as the Oren would haue smitten him, he ranne away into his hole. And then the Oren began to menace the Kat, and the Kat said to him, I am not afraid of thee, albeit I am little, I may impeach thee. And if thou art great, thank thy parents because thereof and not thy selfe; and therefore the strong ought not to dispraise the little, but to loue him, as the chiefe or head ought to loue his limmes: for he that loueth not, ought not to be loued: and therefore the Lord must loue his subiects, if of them he would be loued.

Fable 24. of the Goose and  
her Lord.

**H**e that seeketh to get more then he ought, oftentimes getteth nothing, as saith this fable, of a man which had a Goose that laide every day an egge of gold. The man, of couetousnesse commanded her that every day she should lay two egges. And she said to him, Certainly my master I may not. Wherefore the man was wroth with her, and slew her: by meanes whereof he lost his former profit, and afterward waxed very sorrowfull: Howbeit it was not time to shut the stable doore when the horses be gone: and he is not wise which over-rashly doth any thing whereof he shall repent him afterward, nor he that hurteth himselfe to be auenged on some other. For because he suppoed to win all, he lost all.

Fable

Fable 25. of the old Ape and her  
two children.

**H**e that sometimes the parents both dispraise, oftentimes proueth the best child, as appeareth by this fable, of an Ape which had two children, of the which she hated the one and loued the other, and that she loued she tooke in her armes and fled before the dogges. And when the other saw that his mother left him behind, he ran and leapt on her backe, and by reason that the little Ape which she held in her armes hindered her flight, she let it fall to the ground, and the other which the mother hated, held fast on her backe and was saued, the which from henceforth kissed and embraced his mother, and she then began greatly to loue him. Wherefore many times it hapneth, that thing which is dispraised and hated, is better then that thing which is loued and praised. And many times the children which be praised and loued, doe lesse good then they which be dispraised and hated.

Fable 26. of the Winde and the  
earthen Pot.

**T**he man that ouermuch exalteth himselfe, shall be abased, as appeareth by this fable, of a Potter which made a great pot of earth, which he set in the sun, that it might the better dry, and against this pot there came a great wind. And when the wind saw the Pot, he demaunded, Who art thou? and

and the Pot answered, I am a pot the best made that can be found, and none may impeach me. How said the Winde? Thou art yet all soft, and hast neither vertue ne force, and because I know thy great pride, I shall breake thee in pieces, to the end that thou maist haue knowledge of thy great pride. And therefore the fable ought to be make, and humble himselfe, and shew obedience to his Lord, and not to exalt himselfe moze then he ought, to the end that he be not abased.

Fable xxvii. of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

**O**f two evils men ought euer to eschew the worst, if any of them may be eschewed, as it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe which ran after a Lambe, the which Lambe fled into the house whereas the Goates were; and when the Wolfe saw that he might in no wise take the Lambe, he said to him by sweet words, Leave thy fellowship, and come with me into the fields: for if thou come not, thou shalt be taken with them, and being taken, shalt be sacrificed to their gods. And the Lambe answered to the Wolfe, I had rather to shed all my blood for the love of the gods, and to be sacrificed to them, then to be beaten and deuoured of thee. And therefore he is full of wisdome and prudence, who of two great evils, may escape the greatest of both.

Here end the Fables of Anian.

Here

Here follow the pleasant Fables of Alfonce.

The first Fable is of the exhortation of Sapience and loue.



Rabe of Lucane said to his sonne in this manner: My sonne, beware that the Ant be no moze prudent then thy selfe, which gathereth and assembleth together in the Summer, al he needeth to haue in the winter, & beware that thou sleepe no longer then the Cock doth, which watcheth and awaketh early in the morning, and that he be not wiser then thy selfe, which ruleth and governeth nine Hennes. But it sufficeth that thou rule and governe one well: and also that the dogge be not moze noble then thy selfe, which forgetteth not that good which is done to him, but euer he remembereth it. Besides, my sonne, suppose it not a small matter to haue a good friend, but doubt not to haue a thousand friends. And when Arabe would dye, he demanded this question of his sonne, saying: My sonne, how many good friends hast thou? And the Sonne answered his Father, and said, My father, I haue as I suppose many to be my friends. Then said his father, Account none to be thy friends vnlesse thou hast well assaied and proued them before. For I assure thee, I haue liued longer in this world then thou hast, and yet I haue gotten scarce, y halfe a friend, wherfore I maruaile much how thou

thou hast gotten so many friends. And then the sonne seeing the admiration or wonder of his father, demanded of him, My father, I pray you give me your counsell, how I shall now assay my friend. And his father said to him, Go thou and kill a Calfe, and put it in a sacke all bloody, and beare it to thy first friend, and say to him, It is a man which thou hast slaine, and desire him for the loue which he beareth to thee, that he will keepe thy misdoers secretly, and bury it, to the end that thou maist be saued: this counsell his sonne followed: to whom his friend said, Returne againe, for within my house thou shalt not enter, if thou haue done euill, I will not beare the penalty of it. And thus one after another he assayed all his friends, and euery one of them answered him as the first; whereof he was greatly abashed, & returned againe to his father, and told him how he had sped: and his father said, Many be friends in words, but few in deeds, but I shall tell thee what thou shalt doe. Goe thou to my halfe friend, & beare to him thy calfe, and thou shalt heare what he will say to thee. When the sonne came to the halfe friend of his father, he said to him as he did to the other. And when the halfe friend vnderstood the matter, he tooke him secretly into his house, and led him into an obscure place for to bury his dead calfe, whereby the Sonne knew the truth of the halfe friend was loue. Then the sonne of the Arabe turned againe to his father, and told him all that his halfe friend had done to him. Then the father said to his sonne, that the Philosopher said, that the true friend is found in extreme neede: When demanded the son of his father, Saluest thou neuer a man

man which in his life time did get a whole friend? And his father replied and sayd, I neuer saw any, but I haue heard of such a one: and the Sonne answered, My father, I pray thee that thou wilt reueale it to me, to the end that by aduenture I may get such a one. When the father said vnto his sonne after this manner: My Sonne, sometime I haue heard of two Merchants which neuer beheld each other, the one was of Egypt, and the other of Baldocke, but they had certaine knowledge each of other by their Letters, which they wrote friendly one to the other. It so befell that the Merchant of Baldocke came into Egypt to cheape & buy some ware, whereof his friend was glad, and went to meet him, and brought him louingly to his house. And after he had cheered and refreshed him by the space of foure-tenne dayes, the same merchant of Baldocke became very sicke, whereof his friend was right sorrowfull, and incontinent sent for the best Physicians and Leaches that were in all Egypt, to recouer his health: and when the Physicians had seene and visited him, and well regarded his vyne, they said that he had no bodily sicknesse, but that he was raniſhed with loue: and when his friend heard these words, he came vnto him, and said, My friend, I pray thee that thou shew me thy sicknesse: then his friend said to him, I pray thee that thou wilt bring hither all the women and maidens that be in thy house, to see if the that my heart most desireth be amongst them: And anon his friend brought before him, both his owne daughters, and all his seruants, amongst whom was a faire young Maiden which he had nourished for his pleasure.

ny to some true man, to keepe vntill his returne againe. And because that he had heard some say, that within the City was a true man, he went anon vnto him, and tooke to him his siluer for to keepe it. And when hee had done his voyage, hee came againe to him, and demanded of him his siluer: and hee answered him in this manner: My friend, I know not who thou art, for I neuer saw thee before that I wot of, and if thou sayest or speakest any moe words, I shall make thee to be well beaten. When was the Spaniard sorrowfull and wroth, and thereof he made a complaint to his neighbours, and the neighbours said vnto him, Certainly we be greatly abashed of that ye tell vs, for he is among vs all reputed & holden for a good man and a true, and therefore returne againe vnto him, and with faire words demand of him that he may render vnto thee thy coyne againe: the which thing he did. And the old man answered him more sharply and more rigorously then hee had done before, wherewith the Spaniard was wonderfully wroth: and as he departed out of the old mans house, he met with an old woman, the which demanded of him the cause why hee was so troubled and heauie. And after he had told her the cause why, the old woman said vnto him: Make good chere, for if it be as thou saiest, I shall giue thee counsell how thou shalt recover thy siluer. When he demanded of her, how it might be done: she replied vnto him, bring hither to me a man of thy Country whom thou trustest, and cause faire chests to be made, and fill them all with stones, and by thy fellowes thou shalt cause them to be bozne into his house, and to him they shall say,

say, that a Marchant of Spaine sent them vnto him for to keepe surely: and when the chests shall be within his house, thou shalt goe againe and demand of him thy siluer. Which thing he did, and as the said chests were bozne into his house, the Spaniards went with them that bare them, and said vnto the old man in this manner, My friend, these foure chests bee all full of gold, siluer, and precious stones, which we bring to you, as to the truest and faithfullest man that we know, for to keepe them surely, because that we feare the theues that be in the desert. After the which words said, came he which the old woman had counselled, and demanded of the old man his siluer. And because that the old man feared that the Spaniard would haue dispaied him, he said, Thou art welcome, I marvel why thou tarriedst so long ere thou camest, & incontinent he restored to him his siluer: and thus by the counsell of the old woman which he greatly thanked, he had his goods againe, and returned into his owne countrey.

The iii. Fable speaketh of the subtil inuention of a sentence, giuen vpon a darke and obscure cause.

**O**f a time it befell, that a good man a Labourer died, leaving nothing to his sonnes, but onely a house, the which Sonne liued by the labour of his hands very poorely. This young man had a rich neighbour, which demanded of him if he would sell his house. But he said no, because it was come to him by inheritance. Wherefore the said rich man his neighbour, conuersed ought with him to deceine him: but

but the young man fled his company as much as he might. And the rich man perceiving that the young man fled his company, he bethought him of a great deceit, and requested of the poore young man, that he would let to him part of his house to delue and make a Celler, which he would hold of him for yearly rent: & the poore man let it him. And when the Celler was made, the rich man brought into it tenne tunnes of Dyle, of the which five were full of Dyle, and the other five were but halfe full: and he made a great pit in the earth, and put the five tunnes that were halfe full in it, and the other five upon them; and shut the doore of the Celler, and delivered by the key to the poore young man, and requested him (fraudulently) to keepe well his Dyle: but the poore young man knew not the malice and falshood of his neighbour, wherefore he was content to keepe the key. And within a while after, as the Dyle became deare, the rich man came to the poore man, and asked of him his goods, and the young man gaue him the key. This rich man sold to the Merchants, his Dyle, and warranted each Tunne full. And when the Merchants measured the Dyle, they found but five of the tenne tunnes full, wherof the rich man remanded of the poore young man restitution. And so to haue his house, he made him come before the Judge. And so when the poore man was come before the Judge, he demanded time and space for to answer, for he thought that he had kept well and truly the Dyle: and the Judge granted him a day. And then went he to a Philosopher which was Procuratour for the poore people, & prayed him for charity that he would

giue

giue to him good counsell at his neede. And here heard and told vnto him all his case, and sware vpon the holy Euangelist that he tooke none of the rich mans Dyle. And then the Philosopher answered to him in this manner, My sonne, haue no feare, for the truth may not faile: and the next morrow after the Philosopher went with the poore man before the iudgement seate, and the same Philosopher was constituted by the King for to giue the iust sentence of it. And after that the cause had bene well defended, and pleaded of both parties, the Philosopher said, This same rich man is of good renoune, and I suppose not that he demanded more then he should haue. Also I beleue not that this poore man is guilty of the blame which he putteth on him: but notwithstanding, for to know the truth of it, I ordaine and giue this sentence, that the Dyle pure and cleane of the five Tunnes which are full be measured, and also the Lees thereof, and after that the pure and cleane Dyle of the five Tunnes which be but halfe full, be also measured, with the Lees thereof, and then looke if the Lees of the five Tunnes but halfe full, be equall to the Lees of the other five Tunnes which were wholly full; and if it be so by measuring truly, that lesse be found within these vessels which be but halfe full, then in the other, it shall be thereby sufficiently proued, that no Dyle hath bene taken out of them: but if there be found as much Lees in the one as in the other, the poore man shall be condemned. And of this sentence the poore young man was well content, & by measuring as aforesaid the troth was knowne: wherefore the poore man was

quit

quit



quit, and the rich man was condemned, & his great malice and falshood knowne, for there is no sinne or misdeed done, but that once it shall be manifested.

Fable iiii. of the sentence given vpon the money which was found.

**A** Rich man sometime went by a citie, and as he walked from one side to another, a great purse fell from him, wherein were a thousand crownes, the which a poore man found, and tooke them to his wife to keepe, whereof shee was full glad, and said: thanked be God for all his goodnes which he sendeth to vs, if he send now the great summe, keepe it well. And vpon the morrow after, the rich man made to be cryed thorow the citie, that whosoener had found a thousand crowns in a purse, he should restore them to him againe, and that he should haue for his reward a hundred of them. And when this poore man heard the cry, he came incontinent to his wife, and said to her. My wife, that which we haue found must be restored againe, for it is far better to haue a hundred crownes without sinne, then a thousand wrongfully: and though that the woman would haue resisted, yet in the end shee was content. And thus the poore man restored the thousand crownes to the rich man, and demanded of him his hundred crownes: But the rich man full of falshood said to the poore man, thou renderst not to me my gold which thou didst find, for of it I lacke foure hundred pieces of gold, and when thou shalt bring me againe the same foure hundred pieces of gold, thou shalt haue of mee the hundred crownes which I promised thee. The poore man answered, I haue brought thee all that I haue found,

found, wherefore they fell into great strife, insomuch that the cause was brought before the King to be decided. Wherefore the King called before him a great Philosopher, which was Procurator for the people. And when the cause was well disputed, the Philosopher moued with pittie, called the poore man and said vnto him, Come hither, my friend, By thy faith hast thou restored all the money which thou foundest in the purse? And the poore man answered, Yea Sir by my faith. When the Philosopher said before the assistance: With this rich man is true and faithfull, & that it is not to be thought that he would demand more then he ought to haue: and on the other part, men must beleue that this poore man is knowne for an honest and true man: therefore this is my sentence, That thou Sir King take the thousand crownes, and that thou give a hundred of them to this poore man which found them, and after, when he that hath lost them shall come, thou shalt restore them to him: and if it happen that another finde the thousand foure hundred crownes, they shall be rendered againe vnto this good man which is here present, which saith that he hath lost them. The which sentence was agreeable and pleasing to all the company. And when the rich man saw that he was deceived by his owne folly, he desired mercy and grace of the King, saying: Sir, this poore man that hath found my purse, hath truly restored to me all that I ought to haue, but certainly I would haue deceived him; wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt take pittie on me. And then the King had mercy on him, and the poore man was well contented and paid, and

Labourer answered thus to the Fightingale, soz to heare thee sing I haue taken thee, and the Fightingale answered, Certainly, in vaine thou hast laboured, soz no good will I sing while I am in prison. Then the Labourer answered, if thou singest not well, I shall eat thee. And then the Fightingale said, If thou put me within a pot soz to bee sodden, little meate shalt thou haue of my body: and if thou settest me to be roasted, there shall be lesse, and therefore boyled noz roasted thou shalt not fill thy belly of me; but if thou let me sile I shall do thee great good: soz three things I shall teach thee, which thou shalt loue better then three fat Mine. When the Labourer let the Fightingale sile. And when shee was out of his hands and that she was vpon a tree, she said to the Labourer, My friend, I haue promised thee that I shall teach thee three things, whereof the first is this, that thou beleene nothing which is impossible: the second is, that thou keepe well that is thine: and the third is, that thou take no sorow soz the thing lost, which may not be recovered. And soone after the Fightingale began to sing, & in her song said thus: Blessed be God which hath deliuered me out of the hands of this villaine oz churle, which hath not knowne, seene noz touched the precious Diamond which I haue within my belly: soz if he had found it he had beene right rich, and from his hands I had not escaped. And the Labourer which heard her song, began to complaine and to make great sorow, and after said, I am unhappy that I haue lost so faire a treasure. And the Fightingale said to the Labourer, Now know I well that thou art a foole, soz thou takest

takest grieue soz that which thou shouldst haue none: and soone thou hast forgotten my doctrine, because thou supposdest that in my belly there should be a precious Stone, more heauy than I am, and I told and haue taught to thee, thou shouldst neuer beleue that thing which is impossible: and if that Stone were thine, why hast thou lost it: and if thou hast lost it, and canst not reconer it, why takest thou sorow soz it? Therefore it is vaine to chalice oz teach a foole, that will neuer beleue the doctrine and instruction that is taught him.

Fable vii. of the Rhetorician and the crooke-backed.

A Philosopher said once vnto his sonne, that when he were fallen by chance into some damage oz perill, as soone as he might he should deliuer him out of it, to the end that afterward he should be no more bured therewith, as it appeareth by this fable. Of a certaine Rhetorician, which once demanded of a King, that all of them which should enter into the City, hauing some kind of fault in their bodies, as crooked oz counterfeted, he might haue of them at the entry of the gate a penny. The which request the King granted, and made his letters to be sealed, and written vnder his Signet. And he kept them still at the gate, and of euery one that was lame, scabbed, oz had any deformity on their bodies, he tooke a penny. It hapned on a day, that among the rest a crooke-backed and deformed man would haue entred within the city, without giuing any penny, and did put vpon his backe a faire Mantle, and afterward came to the gate. And when the Porter beheld him, he perceived

perceiued that he was goggle eyed, and said vnto him: Pay me my duty. And the goggle eyed would pay him nothing, wherefore he tooke from him his mantle; and when he saw that he was crookebacked, he said vnto him, Thou wouldst not before pay me a penny, but now thou shalt pay me twaine. And as they strined together, his hat fell off of his head, & the Porter which saw his scabbed head, sayd vnto him, Now shalt thou pay three pence vnto me. And then the Porter yet againe set his hands vpon him, and felt that his body was all scabbed. And as they were thus wrestling together, the crookebacked fell to the ground, and hurt himselfe sore vpon the legges. And then the Porter said vnto him, thou shalt pay me five pence, for thy body is all counterfeited. Therefore thou shalt leaue here thy mantle: and if thou hadst paid a penny at the first, thou haddest gone on thy way free and quiet, without any further molestation. Therefore he is wise that payeth that he oweth, to the end that thereof come not to him greater damage.

The seuenth Fable maketh mention  
of a Disciple and a sheepe.

**T**here was sometime a Disciple which tooke his pleasure to rehearse and tell many Fables. The Disciple prayed his master to tell him a long fable: the Master answered, Beware it happen not vnto vs as it appeareth by this present Fable, of a King and of his Fabulatoz. And the Disciple said to his Master; I pray thee tell me how it befell. And the Master said vnto his disciple, There was sometime a King that had a fabulatoz, which rehearsed vnto him

him oft times when he would sleepe, five Fables to reioyce or make the King merry, and to make him fall asleepe. But it hapned on a day, that the King being heauy and sad, could in no wise fall asleepe. And after the said Fabulatoz had rehearsed his five Fables, the King desired to heare moze. And then the said Fabulatoz rehearsed vnto him three mozt Fables. And then the King said vnto him, What he would heare one moze longer, and then shall I sleepe. And the Fabulatoz then rehearsed vnto him such a fable as heere shall be shewed, of a rich man that went to market or faire to buy Sheepe, and which man bought a thousand Sheepe. And as he was returning from the faire, he came to a River; and because of the great water he could not passe ouer the bidge: neuerthelesse, he went so long to and fro on the riuaige of the said River, that at the last he found a narrow way, vpon the which might passe scant three sheepe at once; and thus he passed, and had them ouer one after another. And hitherto rehearsed of this fable, the Fabulatoz fell asleepe: and anone after the King awoke the Fabulatoz, and sayd to him thus: I pray thee that thou wilt make an end of the fable which thou hast begunne to tell me: and the Fabulatoz answered him in this manner: Sir, the River is great, and the sheepe are little; therefore let the Merchant dzyue ouer his sheepe, and after I shall make an end of my fable. And then was the King pacified. And therefore be thou content with that I haue rehearsed vnto thee, for there be people so curious in speech, that they cannot be contented with few words.

The

## Fable ninth, of the Wolfe, the Fox, and the Cheese.

**T**here was sometime a Labourer, which could not rule his Dren, because they smote with their teete: wherefore the Labourer said to them, I pray God the Wolfe may deuoure you by all. These words when the Wolfe had heard, he hid himselfe nere thereabout, and then came to eate them. And when night was come, the Labourer vnbound his Dren, and let them goe into his house. And when the Wolfe saw the Labourer comming towards him, he said, O thou Labourer, many times in the day thou diddest giue me thy Dren, and therefore keepe thy promise. When the Labourer said to the Wolfe, I promised thee nought at all. And the Wolfe sayd, I shall not let thee passe vntill thou performe thy promise. And as they thus stroue and contended both together, they committed the cause to be pleaded before a Iudge: and as they went to seeke a Iudge, they met a Fox, to whom they declared the cause of their strife. When sayd the Fox vnto them I shall giue on your cause a good sentence; but I must speake with each of you apart, and they were content: and the Fox said vnto the Labourer, Thou shalt giue me a good fat henne, and another to my wife, and I shall make it so, that thou and all thine Dren shall goe freely to thine house. Wherewith the Labourer was well content, and after the Fox said to the Wolfe, I haue well labored for thee, for the Labourer shall giue vnto thee a great Cheese, and let him goe home with his Dren; and the Wolfe was well content. And after the Fox said vnto the Wolfe; Come thou with me, and

and I shall leade thee where the cheese is: and then he led him to and fro, here and there, vntill such time that the moone did shine full brightly, and when they came to a Well, the Fox leapt vpon it, and shewed vnto the Wolfe the shadow of the Cheese, which reflected in the Well, and sayd to him, Looke now good sir how that Cheese is faire, great, and broad: haste thee therefore and go downe, & take the faire cheese. When the Wolfe said to the Fox, Thou must be the first of both that shall go downe, and if thou mayest not bring it by with thee because of the greatnesse, I then shall come to helpe thee; and the Fox was content, because there was a couple of buckets, of the which one went downe, and the other came by; and the Fox entred into one of the buckets and descended into the Well, and being downe, he called vnto the Wolfe, saying: Good sir come hither and helpe, for the Cheese is so bigge that I cannot beare it. When the Wolfe being afraid that the Fox would eate the Cheese, entred hastily into the other bucket, and as fast as the Wolfe went downe, the Fox came by; and when the Wolfe perceiued the Fox comming, he said vnto him: By good sir, ye goe hence: Thou saist true, said the fox, for thus it is with the world, as one cometh downe, the other goeth by. Thus the fox through his subtilty departed, and left the Wolfe in the Well: so lost the Wolfe both the Dren and the Cheese. It is not good therefore to leaue that which is certaine, for that which is vncertaine, for many be in like sort deceiued by the falshood and deceit of Advocates and Iudges.

The tenth Fable, is of the husband, the mother, and the wife.

**T**here was a merchant that married a young woman which had her mother yet alive. It hapned that this Merchant went oute into a farre Countrey for to buy some wares: and as he was going, hee tooke his wife vnto his mother, to keepe and rule her honestly till he came againe. His wife then by the consent of her mother, enamoured her selfe on a faire young man, which gaue her money to buy good chare. And as they thre made merrey, the husband came againe from the faire, and knockt at the doore, where at they were adashed. When sayd the Mother vnto them, Feare not, but doe as I shall tell you, and care not: then said she to the young man, take this sword and goe to the gate, and beware you say no word to him, but let me alone: & as the husband would haue entred into the house, seeing the young man holding a naked sword, he was greatly afraid: and then the mother said to him; My sonne, thou art welcome, be not afraid of this man, for thre ranne after him for to haue slaine him, and by chance he found the doore open, and this is the cause why he came hither to save his life. When the husband said to them, See haue done well, and I con you great thanke. Thus went the young man his way safely by the subtilty of the mother and the daughter: to the which trust not thy selfe, if thou be wise.

Fable xi. of an harlot or bawde.

**T**here was sometime a Gentleman which had a chaste wife, and wonderfull faire, this gentleman would haue gone on pilgrimage to Rome, and left

left his wife at home, because that he knew her for a good and chaste woman: It hapned on a day as she went into the towne, that a faire young man was enamoured on her, and tooke on him hardinesse, and requited her of loue, and promised her very many faire gifts. But she was good, & had rather die than consent thereto: wherefore the yong man almost died for sorrow, to the which fellow came an old woman that demaunded of him the cause of his sicknesse. And the young man discovered vnto her all the matter, asking helpe and counsell of her. And the old woman being wily and malicious, said vnto him; Be of good courage, and feare not, for I shall so bying about this feat, that thou shalt haue thy will fulfilled. And after this, the olde bawde went home vnto her owne house, and made a Cat which she had at home to fast thre daies one after another, and after that she tooke some bread, with a great quantity of mustard vpon it, and gaue the same vnto her Cat for to eate. And when the Cat smelled it, she began for to weepe and cry. And the old woman went vnto the house of the young woman, and bare her little Cat with her, the which good and young woman, receiued and welcomed her very honestly, because that all the towne held her for a goodly woman: and as they were talking together, the young woman had pittie of the Cat which wept, and demaunded of the old woman what the Cat ayld. And the old woman said to her, My faire daughter, reueue not my sorrow; and saying these words, she began to weepe, and said, My friend, for no good will I tel thee the cause why my cat weepeth: and the young woman said, My good mother,

er, Iupiter restor'd to him his sight. When he saw that pageant vpon the tree, he said to her, Ah unhappy Woman, I shall neuer haue ioy with thee. And so that the young woman was ready in speech, and very subtil withall. She replyed presently in this manner, My Friend, thou art beholding to mee for thy sight, for I neuer ceased day nor night to pray vnto the gods, that they would render vnto thee thy sight; Wherefore the goodesse Venus visibly shew'd herselfe to me, and said, That if I would doe some pleasure to the said young man she would restore to thee thy sight: and thus am I the cause of it. When the good man said to her, My right deare wife and good friend, I cry thee mercy, and thanke thee greatly, for thou hast done right to mee, and I great wrong to thee.

Fable xiii. of the Taylor, the Steward  
and his seruants.

**M**AN ought not to doe vnto others, that which he would not haue done vnto himselfe, as it appeareth by this present fable, of a steward which had a Taylor, which was a good workman, as any was in those dayes, which Taylor had many seruants, whereof one was called Medius, that surmounted all the other in shap'ing or sewing; wherefore the Steward commanded his seruants, that the said taylor should alwayes sit well when they were at his house, and eat and drinke of the best. It hapned on a day that the Steward gaue vnto them very delicious meate, in which was some hony, and because that Medius was not there, the Steward said vnto the rest, that they should keepe some of that meate

meate for him. When the master taylor answered, We must haue none, for if he were here, he would not eat of it, for he did neuer loue hony. And as they had done, Medius came, and demanded of his fellows, Why kept ye no part of this meate for mee? When the Steward answered, Because that thy master said, Thou neuer didst eat any hony, and therefore no part of the meate was kept for thee. And Medius answered neuer a word, but beganne to thinke how he might quite his master. Upon a day as Medius was alone, the Steward demanded of him, if he knew no man that could worke so well as his master? And Medius said nay, and that it was great pittie of a sicknesse that he had. When the Steward demanded what sicknesse it was? and Medius answered, My Lord, when he is entred into his frenzie or woodnesse, there cometh vpon him a rage. And how shall I know it, said the Steward? Certainly, my Lord, said Medius, When ye shall see that he shall sit at his worke, and that he shall looke here and there, and shall smite vpon the boord with his fist, then may ye know that his sicknesse cometh vpon him. And then, without ye take him and binde him, and also beate him well, he shall doe great harme and damage. And the Steward said to him, Care not therefore, my friend, for well I shall beware of him. And the next morning the Steward came to see the Taylors. And then Medius, which knew well the cause of his coming, tooke away secretly his spawles sheres, and hid them, and anon his master began to looke for them, & searched all about here and there, and smote with his fist vpon the boord. And then the



Master Stewart began to looke on his manners, and suddenly made him to bee taken and holden by his seruants, and after made him to be bound & well beaten. Then was the Master Tayloz all abashed, and demanded of him, My Lord, Wherefoze doe you beate me so cruelly? What offence haue I done, that I must be bound and thus beaten? And then the Stewart said to him in this manner, because Medius told me that thou art franticke, and if thou be not well bound and beaten, thou wouldest doe great harme. And the master came to his seruant Medius, and rigorously said vnto him, Ha thou bad boy, full of euill words, when salwest thou me mad? And his seruant proudly answered him, My master, When diddest thou see that I ate no honny? Wherefoze I threwe to thee one bone for another. And the master Stewart and all his seruants began to laugh, & said that he had well done. Wherefoze men ought not to doe vnto others, otherwise then they would should be done vnto themselves.

Here followeth the Fables of Poge  
the Florentine.

The first Fable, is of the subtilty of a woman for  
to deccie her husband.

**T**he falshood of women is marvellous, as it  
appeareth by this fable. Of a Merchant that  
was newly wedded vnto a faire young wo-  
man, which Merchant went ouer the Sea to buy  
and sell, and for to get maintenance whereby to  
live honestly: and because that he stayed very long,  
his

his wife supposed that he was dead, and therfoze she  
enamoured her selfe of another man that did vsie her  
company, and did her much good: for he caused her  
house to be new built, which had great need of repa-  
ration, and much goods also he brought into the same.  
And a long time after the departing of the said mer-  
chant, he came againe to his house, which he saw  
builded, and saw diuers dishes, pottes, pannes, and  
such other household stuffe, wherefoze he asked of his  
wife, how she had found the meane to haue repaired  
so soundly his house? And she answered that it  
was by the grace of God. And hee said, Blessed be  
God for it. And when he was within the Chamber,  
he saw the bedde very richly couered, and the walls  
well hanged, and demanded of his wife as he had  
done before, and she answered as before. For which  
he thanked God as he had done before. And as hee  
was set at dinner, there was brought before him vi-  
to his wife, a child of thre yeares of age, or therea-  
bout, whereof he demanded of his wife to whom  
this young child belonged: and she said, God of his  
goodnesse hath sent it me. When said the Merchant  
to his wife in this manner, I render no thanks to  
God for this, for he hath taken too much paine vpon  
my worke, and I will not that in any wise hee  
meddle any more therewith, for such things belong  
onely to me, and not to him.

The second Fable, is of the woman  
and the hypocrite.

**T**he generation or birth of the hypocrite is dam-  
nable and euill. As it appeareth by this fable,  
which

cheere, but euer she looked downeward to the earth, all sad and melancholious. And when her mother saw her daughter so sorrowfull, and of mourning countenance, she called her into a Chamber, whereas no body was but they two, and asked of her the cause of her sorrow, saying: How fare yee my daughter? What want ye, Haue ye not all things comming to you after your desire? Wherefore take ye such heauinesse? Then the Daughter weeping said vnto her Mother, Alas my mother, We haue not married me to a man, so of such a thing as a man ought to haue, he hath neuer a deale, saving a litle part of the thing for which wedding is made. And then the Mother right sorrowfull and wroth of this euill fortune, went to her husband Nerus, and told him of the euill hap of her daughter, whereof he was greatly wroth and sore troubled. And soone after this fortune was told among all the linage of Nerus, whereof they were all sorrowfull, to heare that so faire and comely a young man, endued with so many good gifts and graces, besides riches and renoune, was faulty of the thing for which marriage is made. Nevertheless, the tables were set and covered, and when time of dinner came, the young man came into the house of Nerus, with diuers of his friends and his parents, and incontinent they set them all downe at the table, some with heavy and sorrowfull harts, & some with merry mindes and ioyfull countenances. And when the young man saw, that his friends made good cheere, and that all the friends of his wife were heavy and sad, he prayed and besought them, that they would tell him the cause of their heauinesse and sorrow, but

none

none of them all would answer him. Nevertheless, he besought them againe; and then one of them full of sorrow, and more forward in speech then any the rest, said, Certainly my faire sonne, thy wife hath told vs that thou art no perfect man. At these words the yong man began to laugh, and said with an high voyce, that all that were there might vnderstand him, My Parents and my friends, make good cheere, for the cause of your sorrow shall soone be appeased: and then he being cloathed with a short gowne, vntyed his hosen, and tooke his member out with his hand, which was great and very sufficient, and laid the same vpon the table, so that all the company there present might see it. Wherefore all the fellowship were very ioyfull and glad, many of the men wishing themselves the like, and diuers of the women desiring that their husbands had such an instrument. And then some of the friends and Parents of Nerus daughter, went to her and said, that she had done great wrong to complaine of her Husband, for he had wherewith she might be well contented, and blamed her great folly. To whom she answered in this manner, saying, My friends, why blame you me? I complaine not without a cause: For our Ass which is a brute Beast, hath a member as great as mine arme, and my husband which is a man, his member is scarce halfe so great: wherefore the simple and young damsell weend, that men should haue their members as great or greater then Asses. Therefore it is oft said, that much lacketh he of that that a foole thinketh or weeneth.

The fourth Fable of hunting  
and hawking.

**P**Oge a Florentine rehearseth to vs, how once he was in fellowshippe where men spake of the superfine cure of them which gouerne the dogs and Hawkes: Whereof a Millanois named Paulus began to laugh, and required of Poge that he would rehearse some fable of the said Hawkes, and for loue of the fellowship he said in this manner. Sometime there was a Physicion which was a Millanois. This Physicion healed soles of all manner of folly, and in what manner he healed them I shall tell you. This Leech had within his house a great garden, and in the midst of it was a great and deepe pit, which was full of stinking water; and within the said pit the Physicion put the soles after the quantity of their foolishnesse, some vnto the knee, and other vnto the bellie. And there he bound them to a post, but none he put deeper then vnto the stomacke, for doubt of farther inconuenience. It hapned then that among other, one was brought to him, which he put into the said water vp to the thighes. When he had bene the space of fiftene dayes within the said water, he began to be peaceable and had his wit againe. And that he might take some disport and consolation, he required his keeper that he might walke about the Garden, promising not to depart thereout. The keeper that kept him, vnbound him from the stake, and had him out of the water. And when he had bene many dayes out of the pit, he went nere vnto the gate of the Garden, but durst not goe out, lest he should bee put againe within the said pit. Upon a time he went vnto

vnto the gate, and as he looked all about, he saw a faire young man on horsebacke, that bare a Sparhawke on his fist, and had with him a couple of faire Spaniels; whereat the foole was all abashed, and because of nouelty, he called the said yong man, saying, My friend, I pray thee thou wilt tell me what that is thou art set vpon. And the young man said. It is a horse, which doth profit me to chase and beate mee where I please. When he asked of him, What is that thou bearest on thy fist, and whereto is it good? and the young man answered him, It is a Sparhawke which is good to take Partriches and Quailles. Yet againe did the foole demaund of him, My friend, what are those that doe follow thee, and wherefore are they good? When the young man answered him, they be Dogs, and are good to search and find Partriches & Quailles; and when they haue raised them, my Sparhawke takes them, whereof proceedeth vnto me great ioy and pleasure. And the foole demanded againe, What profit shall all that they take in the whole yeare bring thee? And the young man said vnto him, Foure or five crownes, or therabouts. What, no more, said the foole? And how much shall they dispend thee in a yeere? And the young man answered, Forty or fifty crownes. And when the foole heard these words, he said againe to the young man, O my friend, I pray thee that soone thou wilt depart from hence, for if our Physicion come, he shall put thee into the same pit, because thou art a foole: I was put in it vp to the thighes, but he will surely put thee therein vp to the chinne: for thou dost commit the greatest folly that euer I heard spoken of.

And

And therefore the study of hunting and hawking is a slothfull cure, and none ought to doe it without he were very rich, and a man of livelyhood, and yet it ought not to be done often but sometime for to take dispozt, and to drive away melancholy.

The v. Fable is of the recitation of some monsters.

**P**oge of Florence reciteth how in his time one named Hugh, Prince of the Medices, saw a Cat that had two heads, and his legges before and behind were double, as they had bene ioyned together. Also about the marches of Italy, within a meadow was sometime a Cow, which brought forth a Serpent of marvellous greatnesse, right hideous and fearefull; for first he had the head greater then the head of a calfe. Secondly, he had a necke of the length of an Asse, and his body made after the likenesse of a Dogge, and his taile was wondrous thicke and long without comparison. And when the Cow saw that she had made such a birth, and that within her belly she had borne so humble a beast, she was very fearefull, and lifted her selfe vp, and supposed to haue fled away; but the Serpent with his long taile enlaced her two hinder legges, and then the Serpent began to sucke the Cow, & sucked so long till that he found some milke. And as soone as the Cow could escape from him, she fled vnto the other kine, but incontinent her paps, and her hinder legs, and all that the Serpent touched, was all blacke a great time after. And soone after, the said Cow made a faire Calfe, the which maruaille was anonched to the said Poge, he being at Ferrara. And yet againe soone after that there

there was found in a riuer a monster mariner of the Sea, of the forme or likenesse as followeth. First he had from the nauell upward the likenesse of a man, & from the nauell downward, like the forme or making of a fish, the which part was gemine, that is to say, double. Secondly he had a great head, and he had great hoznes about his eares. Also he had great paps, and a wonderfull great & horrible month, and his hands reached into his intrailles or bowels, and at both his elbowes he had wings right broad and great of fishes mailes, wherewith he swimmied, and onely he had but the head out of the water. It happened then, that as many women washed cloathes at the said riuer, that this horrible and dreadfull Beast for default of meat came swimming toward the said woman. Of the which he tooke one by the hand, and supposed to haue drawne her into the water, but she was strong and well aduised, & resisted the said monster, and as she defended her selfe, she began to cry with a high voyce, Helpe, helpe, whereupon five women ranne vnto her, and by hurling of stones they slew the said monster. Also Poge saith, that being at Ferrara, he saw the said Monster, and said, that diuers young children were accustomed for to wash and bathe themselves in the said riuer, but they came not all home againe, wherefore the women washed their clothes no more at the said Dozt: for the folke supposed that the Monster killed and deuoured the young children which were drowned. Also, within a little while after it befell about the marches of Italy, that there was a child borne which had two heads, and two visages, beholding one another.

¶

and

and the armes of each other embraced the body, the which body from the nanill vpward was ioyned, saue the two heads, and from the nauell downward, the lims were all separated one from another, in such wise, that the lims of generation were shewed manifestly. Of the which child, tydings came vnto the person of Poge at Rome.

Fable vi. of the Parson, the dogge, and  
the Bishop.

**S**iluer causeth all things to be done, vnto the hal-  
lowing againe of a place, which is prophane or  
interdict. As ye shall heare by this present fable, of a  
Priest dwelling in the countrie, which sometime  
had a dogge which he loved well, the which Priest  
was very rich. This dogge by procelle of time died,  
and when he was dead, he buried him in the church-  
yard, because of the great loue wherewith he loued  
him. It hapned so, that the Bishop knew hereof of  
the aduertisement of some other, wherfore he sent  
for the said Priest, & supposed to haue of him a great  
sum of gold, or else he would make him to be seuerely  
punished, and he wrote a letter to the said Priest,  
of which the tenor contained cruelly, that he should  
come and speake with him. And when the Priest had  
read the letter, he vnderstood well all the cause, and  
thought in himselfe that he would haue of him some  
siluer, for he knew well enough the condition of the  
Bishop: and forthwith he tooke his beniar & a hun-  
dred crownes with him, and went for to speake with  
his Prelate, and when he came befoze him, the Pre-  
late

late beganne to shew him the enormity of his mis-  
doe: and the Priest answered, Right reuerend Fa-  
ther, if ye knew the soneraigne prouidence wherewith  
the said dogge was filled, ye would not maruell if he  
hath wel deserved to be buried honestly and worship-  
fully among men: he was all filled with humane  
witte, as well in his life, as in the article of his death.  
And then the Bishop said, How may that be? Re-  
hearse to me then the whole manner of his life. When  
the Priest said, Certainly, right reuerend Father,  
ye ought right well to know, when he was at the ar-  
ticle of Death, he made his testament, and the dogge  
knowing your name and indigence, bequeathed you  
a hundred crownes of gold: the which I bring now  
vnto you. And the Bishop for lone of the money al-  
loved the priest, and also allowed the same sepulture.  
And therefore siluer causeth all things to be granted  
or done.

The vii. Fable, is of the Fox, the Cocke,  
and the dogges.

**A**L the reward of them that mocke other, is to  
be mocked themselves, as appeareth by this  
present fable, of a Cocke which sometime saw a foxe  
come toward him soze hungry; which Cocke suppo-  
sed that he came toward him but for to eate some of  
his hens, for which cause the cocke made all his hens  
to fly vpon a tree. And the foxe began to cry toward  
the Cock good tydings good tydings, and after he sa-  
luted the cock right reuerently, and demanded of him  
thus, O Gossip, what doest thou here so high, and  
the Hennes with thee: hast thou not heard the good  
tydings

tydings worthy and profitable for vs: and then the Cocke full of malice answered to him, *Pray verily gossip, but I pray thee tell them vnto vs.* Then said the Fox to the Cocke, *Certainly gossip, they be the best that euer ye heard, for ye may go and talke and commune among all beasts without any harme or damage, and they shall doe you both pleasure and all seruice to them possible.* For thus it is concluded and also confirmed by the great counsell of beasts, that none be so hardie, to bere or let in any wise none other, be it neuer so little a beast; for the which good tydings, I pray thee that thou wilt come downe, to the end that we may sing *Te Deum* laudamus for toy. But the Cocke knowing well the falsnesse of the Foxe, replied in this manner, *Certainely my brother and good friend, thou hast brought vnto me right good tydings, whereof more then a hundred times I thanke thee: and saying these words, the Cocke lift vp his necke & lookt farre from him, and the fore said, What gossip, whereabout lookest thou? And the Cocke said, Certainly my Brother, I see a couple of Dogs coming hither with open mouth, which as I suppose, come for to bring vs the tydings thou hast told vs.* And then the fox shooke for feare of the dogges, and said to the Cocke, *God be with you my friend, it is time that I depart hence before the dogges come nether: and saying these words, he ran away as fast as he might; and then the Cocke cryed after him, saying: Gossip, why runnest thou thus: if the peace be accorded, thou oughtest to doubt nothing.* Ya gossip, said the fore, I doubt that these two dogs haue not heard of the de-

ce

ce of the peace. And thus when a beguiler is beguiled, he receiueth the salarie or paiement which he ought to haue. wherefore let every man keepe himselfe there-from.

**P**Ogius rehearseth, that there were two women in Rome which he knew, of diuers age & forme, which came to the Curtisan to get somewhat for their bodies; whom he receined, and it happened, that he knew the fairest of them both twice, and the other once, and so departed. Afterward when they should depart, he gaue to them a piece of cloth, not telling how much each of them should haue for their part: and in parting of the said cloth, there fell betwene the women a strife, because one of them demanded two parts, after the erigence of her worke, and the other the halfe, each of them shewing their reasons, the one saying, that she had suffered him twice to doe his pleasure, and the other pretended that she was ready, and in her was no default, and so from brawling they fell to fighting. And their husbands not knowing the cause of their strife, each of them defending his wifes cause; from the fighting of the women, it came to their husbands, with buffets & casting of stones, so long that men ran betwene them, and after the custome of Rome, both the husbands were brought to prison, bearing enmitie each to other, and not knowing wherefore. The said cloth was put into the hands of women secretly, and not parted, but it was secretly argued among the women how it would be parted: and they demanded of Doctors what was the law of it. He saith also that



**T**here was in a certaine towne a Widower that wooed a Widow, to have her to his Wife, & at the last they were agreed and sure together. And when a young woman being servant with the said Widow heard thereof, shee came to her Distresse and said to her, Alas Distresse, what have you done? Why said the Distresse: I have heard say, said the Maid, What he is a perilous man, soz he lay so oft, and knew so much his other wife, that shee died thereof. and I am sorry thereof that you should fall into the like case. To whom the Widow answered and said: Certainly I desire to die, soz heere is nothing but sorow and care in this world.

This was a courteous excuse of the Widow.

FINIS.



THE TABLE OF THE LIFE AND  
PLEASANT FABLES OF Esop,  
and so forth of *Anian*, *Alfonce*, and  
Poge the Florentine.

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